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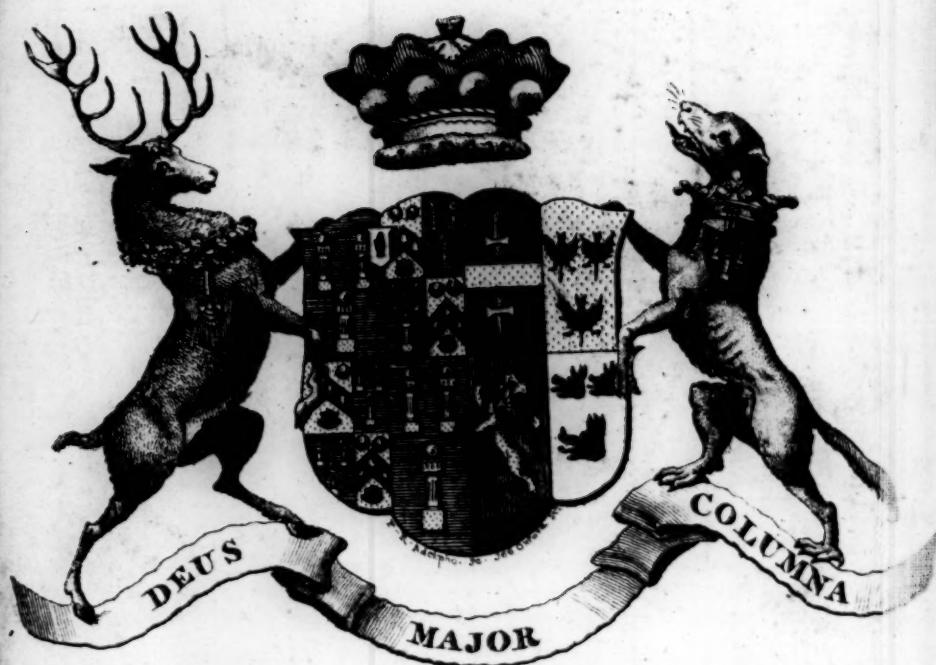
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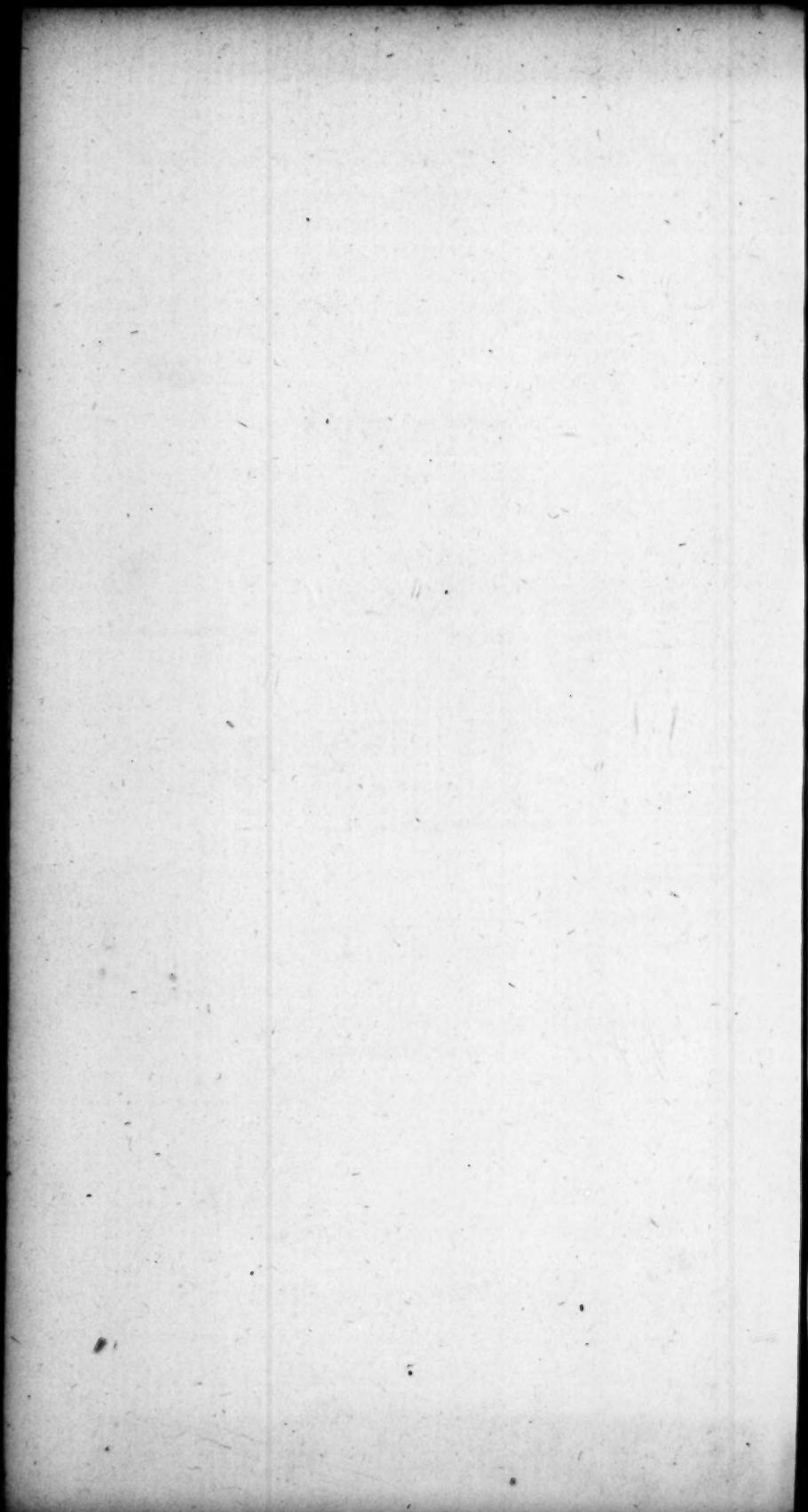
JOHN second LORD HENNIKER.
1804

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JOHN second LORD HENNIKER.
1804



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T H E

SELF-TORMENTOR,

A

N O V E L.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

V O L. II.

“ Lovers and Madmen have such seething Brains,
“ Such shaping Fantasies, that apprehend
“ More than cool Reason ever comprehends.”

SHAKESPEARE.

L O N D O N:

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M D C C LXXXIX.



THE
SELF-TORMENTOR.

LETTER I.

Mrs Courtland to Mrs. Maitland.

Roselands.

THAT same discontent, of which my last informed you*, still prevails amongst us; though my brother is returned from the Bristol Wells, his appearance no longer gives me that tender satisfaction I felt in his company before he left us: how can I love the man, though my brother, when I cannot respect his morals? Alas! how I deceived myself! I thought him a reformed man; when too late I find, it was only the absence of temptation that gave him the appearance of one. My father certainly sees our Emmeline's too tender partiality

* This letter does not appear.

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for this truant boy, and therefore endeavours to destroy it, by redoubling his affection for her. In the five days my brother has been at home, he has not found means to utter as many sentences to her; she reads, rides, or walks so perpetually with my father, that he cannot surprize her a single moment.

I believe he is very wretched, but he is very silent; does he not, dear Madam, deserve the evil his ill conduct has brought on him? If his passion for Emmeline were a virtuous one, why must he hurry into engagements with this new mistress, which are a dishonour to him? I fancy he is going another tour; his servants are all ordered to hold themselves in readiness to depart at eleven: he is returning to the Wells again; no doubt that seducing Lady Carlton is also there;—but I am interrupted—

I went down to make breakfast as usual; my brother not appearing, I sent to let him know we waited for him.

He soon made his appearance equipped for travelling: “ You are going to leave us then, Courtland,” said my father.

“ Can

“ Can I do otherwise, Sir,” said he, “ when the conduct of all the family tells me I’m an unwelcome guest? Do you not look upon me, Sir, rather as an alien, than as your son? My sister treats me with the cold formality of a stranger, not the warm affection of a sister. Miss Ackworth too (she started at the sound of her name, and turned pale as ashes)—she neither treats me with the confidence of friendship, or that tender regard of a sister which you, Sir, had given me room to expect. Though I am ignorant by what means I have been robbed of all your esteem, yet I must say, in my own defence, since the first day that introduced me to you, it has been the sole pleasure of my life, not only to preserve, but to improve it. I have some thoughts of going into Warwickshire, where, Sir, I shall be happy to hear from you, should I ever recover your good opinion.” He took my father’s hand, then mine, whilst his bright eyes, glistening through tears, were fixed on Emmeline.

Then, after a pause, he said, “ If you could, Sir, see the struggles of my soul, they are great: honour me at least with your compassion, and remember, that in quitting this house, I leave behind me all I hold dear on earth. I have made this sacri-

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fice at the expence of my peace ; but, in justice to us all, I ought to make it."— Then turning aside to conceal his tears, he was hastening from us ; my father hurried after him, and caught him by the arm.

" Stay, Courtland," said he, " your candour demands a like return : if you can prove to us, that your conduct, whilst at the Hot Wells, was such as could entitle you to the regard of your father, or the chastened affection of your sisters, with one heart, with one voice, we shall again restore you to our good opinion."

" Hear me, Sir," cried he, " and I will answer you with the sincerity I would use at the awful bar of Heaven." He then gave us an account of all that had happened to him at the Wells ; after which my father told him the very different accounts he had received ; which must, he said, have arisen from having lent his phaeton to Lord Layton, who had imprudently dashed his own to pieces ; that it was his daily custom to drive his favourite mistress about the Downs, attended by two of his servants who played remarkably well on the French-horn.

My father said, he wanted no other justification, and added, " You have entirely, Courtland, recovered my good opinion, and if you can as easily regain that

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that of your sisters, we shall yet be a family of harmony and love ; what say you my girls ?”

I flew to him, and, throwing my arms around his neck, exclaimed, "I am satisfied, my dearest brother; I want no farther concessions; receive me once more to your affections: to be deprived of them, would be an affliction my heart is not prepared to meet." He embraced me again and again, denouncing the heaviest evils on himself, should he ever voluntarily incur my displeasure.

"But what says my other sweet sister?"
catching Emmeline to his bosom. "May I hope this silence, this emotion, is propitious to my wishes? May I flatter myself that, animated by the amiable examples of forgiveness before you, your heart has granted me that pardon which your tongue hitherto has refused to utter? Till I am certain of my fate, within these arms you will remain a close prisoner."

My father said, he thought the detention not unjust, whilst the happiness of a fellow-creature depended on her reply.

"Then," cried she, overwhelmed with blushing confusion, "I do most sincerely rejoice in the present reconciliation. O Mr. Courtland!" (casting up her fine

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eyes) "to have forfeited the regard of such a father, such a sister, must, in your cooler moments, have made you truly miserable; and then, instead of my resentment, you would have had all my pity.—Now, am I not entitled to my liberty?"

"Not," replied he, "till you have paid the customary fees of imprisonment," (tenderly kissing her.)

Thus, my dear Madam, are we again reconciled to each other, and my poor bustling brother is so enamoured, and so jealous of his Emmeline, that he never enjoys the present moment lest the next should be less perfect; and the poor girl is so enamoured of her swain, without knowing it, that I often wish for you, if it were only for the purpose of alarming her, which I durst not do for fear of increasing her reserve. Adieu.

S. COURTLAND.

LETTER II.

H. Courtland, *Efq*; to G. Montrose, *Efq*.

Roselands.

“THE art of prudence,” says a celebrated writer, “lies in gaining the esteem of the world, and turning it to our own advantage.”

But, God help me, I have lately had neither prudence to secure myself, nor discretion to assist others. We set out in life with all false notions, and false opinions, from which, as we farther advance, we can derive no solid enjoyments.

But I will not stop to moralize in the fond moment when my bosom beats with a satisfaction unknown to me before. Yes, Montrose; but that I doubt every thing wherein my love for Emmeline is concerned, I would venture to declare I am lord of her heart; and, as the welcome intelligence comes from a rival, surely I need not doubt the truth.

In the evening of the day when the family reconciliation took place, Mr. Falkner drank tea with us; he joined me afterwards in the garden, and said that he

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felt a sincere pleasure to see peace again restored to a family so very dear to each other: "And I know," added he, "had you gone away as you intended, your absence would have been death to the young ladies."

"My sister, I verily believe," rejoined I, "would most tenderly have regretted my absence. But as to Miss Ackworth—"

"I can venture to say," returned he, "from what I have seen, that her regrets would have been exquisitely painful."

"Ah! how—what—when—where?" cried I with quickness; "do you think my departure to the North Pole would have given her one painful moment? Do you remember the other day, when every one thought me dying at your house, she never expressed the least concern for me? And when I recovered, I saw her chatting with you at the other end of the room. I must say, I have not yet got the better of her unkindness."

"Then you must have overlooked her concern," added he; "for the moment she saw you ill, she was seized with a tremor which made her unable to support herself: she applied a cordial to your lips, until she dropped senseless into my arms, and I found all the difficulty in

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in the world to restore her, till I assured her over and over again, that your disorder was merely temporary, occasioned by fatigue and abstinence, and that it would soon go off. Had you but seen," continued he, "the joy she felt at these assurances, it must have awakened in you, Courtland, sentiments of the most tender, most grateful nature."

" My dear, dear friend," grasping his hand, " all that I did not see and hear then, I feel now. Dear Falkner, you have made me the happiest of men, and I hope time will convince you I am also the most grateful. What a tide of unexpected transport have you poured in upon my heart! Were I convinced that my angel feels an equal affection, I would not lose a moment laying every fond wish of my soul before her ; but should she receive my offered hand through a sort of gratitude to my father, and not affection for me, I should be the most miserable wretch breathing."

Lady Augusta Finleigh is come to Darnley, by which means domestic peace has been sacrificed to indulge the parade of fashion. Much visiting, much form, and much stupid ceremony, has been the consequence of it. Adieu.

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LETTER III.

Lady Augusta Finleigh to Lady Carlton.

Darnley.

BUT that I have every thing to hope from the natural inconstancy of the sex, I should conclude that Courtland was a lost man; so entirely is every faculty of his soul absorbed by that hateful Emmeline! The world is all a blank to him, except that small space which she fills up. Mortifying thought, my dear Lady Carlton, that graces like ours should have been sacrificed to this rustic girl! O had not my egregious folly once refused his offered hand, she had not lived to insult *me* with *her* triumph.

The intimacy of our families brings us most days together. I have practised every art my fertile brain could suggest, to win back the gallant rover; but his inflexible soul is neither to be touched by pity nor awakened by love. I have dressed at him, sighed, languished, ogled, yet still he is unmoved. But let the too agreeable deceiver beware; if your Augusta cannot make him happy, the hour may yet come when she may render him gloriously miserable! Adieu.

A. FINLEIGH.

LETTER IV.

H. Courtland, *E/q*; to G. Montrose, *E/q*.

Roselands.

CONGRATULATE me, dear George, on my present happy prospects; my sweet Emmeline is all at present I could wish her. If my vanity does not deceive me, my assiduities, my fond attentions, have at length awakened in her gentle bosom a passion, if not ardent as my own, yet at least I may flatter myself it is such as will one day make me the happiest of men!

Though Falkner does not abate in civilities to her, yet am I less alarmed at them, as my own are always sure to find a tender welcome with her.

The more I study the character of this Falkner, the greater my perplexities are: at the age of thirty thus to exclude himself from the world, who, I believe, has seen a great deal of it, is very extraordinary; for in conversation he is frequently apt to betray himself, then looks confused, hurries over the subject, and leaves his audience as much perplexed

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as himself: perhaps his narrow fortune thus exiles him from a world in which he was born to ~~shine~~.

I have hinted as much to my father, and entreated him, if he found that to be the case, to command my fortune, would he embrace any situation in life which gold could purchase: for, next to yourself, George, there is not a man on earth I could so much esteem, were I master of his sentiments with respect to my angel.

On mentioning the above to my father, he said it would give him the highest pleasure to see me cultivate a friendship with a man of Falkner's worth; that he was pleased with the generous offer I had made, but he believed a short time would restore him again to that *rank* in the world which he had always held.

Very mysterious this, and much it has puzzled me; but any further enquiry would be impertinence.

" You would be mighty proud," said my sister to me the other day, " if you knew what weeping and wailing your late absence caused amongst us; but Emmeline, I think, was the most wretched of the two; for she even fancied her flowers drooped on their stalks, that her carnations faded, her roses withered, and her honey-

honeysuckles lost their sweets, when you, who before gave life to every thing, were gone."

" Dear, dear creature," cried I, " don't raise me to rapture in order to sink me to despair: tell me, my sweet Emmeline," (kissing her hands) " if I were so lamented, that I may learn how to moderate my joy."

" Whatever it may have been," cried she, endeavouring to disengage her hands, " this violent behaviour of your's, Sir, stands a fair chance to cancel my former sentiments."

" Pardon me, dear girl; for if, by constantly studying the catalogue of your perfections, surprize sometimes turns me aside from the path of prudence, you must bear with my rhapsodies, of which your charms are the cause."

" Why, child," said my sister, " do you blush, if you are not guilty?—for never criminal at the bar looked more so than you do at this instant."—Richly crimsoned were her cheeks.

Adieu for the present; we are to attend Lady Augusta's tea-table.

H. COURTLAND.

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LETTER V.

Miss Courtland to Mrs. Maitland.

HERE am I enjoying the most diverting scenes in life, and want just such a friend as my dear Mrs. Maitland to share them with me.

Never, surely, was mortal man so enamoured of human clay, as my brother of his Emmeline; and never was poor girl more absorbed in the passion of love than she. Their subterfuges and embarrassments have the finest effect in the world on the by-standers, and now and then, just to give a little zest to their passion, I raise the prettiest contentions in the world betwixt them.

I was employed at my needle when she came into my dressing-room; she threw herself into a chair, but spoke not.

“ You are very melancholy to-day Emmeline; a little love-sick I suppose; it is a terrible disorder; I do pity you; and my brother I find has caught the infection.”

“ Good Heavens! what do you mean? indeed I have a terrible head-ach.”

“ No,

"No, child, the pain lies a little lower, somewhere hereabouts," (laying my hand on her heart.) "I wish you would consult my brother on the nature of your disease."

"Why do you alarm me, Sophy?" (With quickness at that instant my brother entered unperceived by her; I held up my finger to command his silence) "Now, as to why I alarm you, my dear, I'll tell you: I do believe you have caught a very dangerous disease, and my poor brother, being always fondling about you, has caught the infection; and I do think the same medicine, if properly administered, might cure you both."

"If your good brother, Sophy, were not generosity itself, he might draw conclusions from your behaviour very unfavourable for me." (The tears swam in her eyes as she spoke.)

"Surely, Emmeline, I have said nothing to make you weep: your tears must arise from some other cause. I hope you have had no dispute with Harry; for I know he loves to wrangle."

"Indeed, Sophy, I have not; I think I could not bear his displeasure."

"Poor girl," continued I; "you have too much sensibility ever to be happy! But why do you sigh? I'll send for my brother

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brother to comfort you. What a folly it is in us girls, Emmeline, to be always suppressing feelings which it would do honour to our hearts to have known."

" That is to suppose at once, Sophy, I have feelings I dare not avow. If you have discovered any impropriety in my conduct, tell me so ; for I will pronounce a severer sentence on myself, than even my worst enemy would do."

" Generous, charming girl," exclaimed my impatient brother, folding her to his heart, " your matchless excellences may create you enemies, whilst"—(she was ready to faint)—" Heavens ! what is the matter, my sweet girl ? speak ; are you ill ? I should be the most wretched of beings, if the little dialogue I have just overheard between you and my sister should be the cause of real pain to you."

" I am hurt, Sir ; I have not been generously dealt by."

" Pooh, pooh, never mind her," continued I ; " there is no dependance to be put on the workings of a distempered brain : do, brother, feel her pulse."—He caught both hands, and pressed them to his lips.

" You are a foolish boy," said I ; " that is not the way physicians feel a lady's pulse."

" Yet

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“ Yet this is the way, my dear Sophy,” said he, “ every physician would feel the pulse of a lady when he wanted to know the state of the heart.—But my dear Emmeline, you are certainly a little feverish.”

“ So I have been telling her,” said I; “ and if you are not otherwise engaged, Harry, I will step and order her own carriage, and you may drive her an airing.”

I ran out of the room; she called me back to no purpose, my brother entreating me to do as I had promised; I was as good as my word, and in their absence have scribbled thus far. Adieu.

S. COURTLAND.

LETTER VI.

Mrs Ackworth to Mrs. Aylbert.

Roselands.

I CALL upon you at once, dearest Madam, to be my advocate and judge. I feel all the alarms of a bad mind, without being conscious of intending ill to any one; yet my mind is a prey to quietudes

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quietudes my best reason cannot explain.

Though the General's affection for me hourly increases, he seems to read my inmost thoughts. I blush, hesitate, and tremble : he sees my embarrassment, and strives, with his parental endearments, to raise my drooping spirits—says, he hopes his son's conduct continues to merit my esteem ; and then adds, “The part my Emmeline has taken in my boy's reformation shall never be forgotten by his grateful father.”

A few days since we dined at Darnley. The old Lord Finleigh only differs from his son in this—that more years of vicious experience have rendered him more contemptible than Lord Roxborough, who, ever my aversion, is now more so ; and, from what follows, you will say I have no great reason to be flattered with the friendship of his sister.

Before dinner, a walk was proposed, by Lady Augusta : she gave her hand to Mr. Courtland ; the old peer offered himself to attend me ; and Lord Roxborough gallanted Miss Courtland.

We continued chatting for some time, till her delicate ladyship, in order to keep Mr. Courtland to herself, complained of fatigue, and sat down.—I continued

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continued my ramble with my sexagenary beau, who tortured his imagination for subjects that he thought would best please me. I treated all his rhapsodies with silent contempt, which he misconstruing into approbation, threw his arm round me, and would have kissed me. I had not disengaged myself when Mr. Courtland appeared—his face crimsoned with passion.

The undaunted peer, not in the least disconcerted, said, “ If these lovely creatures, Mr. Courtland, do not lock up their charms when they go abroad, they have only themselves to blame for leading us into temptation ; for who can behold so blushing a rose without being enamoured of its sweets ? ”

“ The ladies can expect no less a compliment from a man of your lordship’s gallantry,” returned he.

“ But pri’thee, Courtland, how do *you* manage it—Can you always live in sunshine without being sometimes scorched with its heat ? ”

“ My lord,” returned he, “ there is a fascinating charm in modest merit which, though it gives poignancy to the feelings, yet chastens and corrects their ardour : and, so far from availing myself of advantages to which you think my

my situation entitles me, I can only sigh for what prudence forbids me to hope."

" I fancy, however, Courtland, this young lady, under your tuition, has learnt the faculty of blushing ; for, by my faith, you young rakes, with the slightest sketch of your pencil on the cheek of beauty, can give a more indelible impression than other men with all the powers of language at command—Do you know the saucy creature has not uttered three sentences since we left you !"

" Your lordship," returned I, " seemed so pleased with your own eloquence, it would have been cruel to have interrupted an harangue in which you appeared to receive so much satisfaction."

When Lady Augusta has only her country neighbours about her (as I have seen in other families the children introduced to the company after dinner), so her ladyship, when we retired to the drawing-room, rang for her woman to bring in her *dear little ones* ; who returned soon after, loaded with squirrels, birds, lap-dogs, Guinea-pigs, and white mice, which she careffed alternately. Knowing my aversion to the mice, after she had wasted a hundred kisses upon one, by way of doing me a favour, she tossed it into my bosom :

som: I jumped up, and began shaking off the little animal; when I accidentally set my foot on her favourite Chloe. The poor creature howled most piteously, and in her rage fastened her teeth in my ankle. With some difficulty I shook her off, when her enraged ladyship caught her in her arms, and lavished on her a thousand caresses, saying, my barbarous treatment of her favourite had nearly made her faint.

“Heavens!” exclaimed Mr. Courtland, entering; “surely your ladyship must be mistaken. No act of barbarity could ever proceed from a bosom so gentle, so humane, as Miss Ackworth’s.”

His sister told him what had passed.—He tenderly enquired if I was recovered of my fright; if not, begged he might call for some drops.—I said, as the bustle was now over, I begged it might be no more remembered.

After this, a smart altercation began between Lady Augusta and Mr. Courtland.—She said, if she had behaved improperly, it was owing to her weak nerves.

“However delicate fine ladies nerves may be,” rejoined he, “they ought not to make them forget the duties of humanity;

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manity; besides, were your lover present, Madam, it might create his jealousy to see so much fondness lavished on a set of nasty animals."

I entreated the subject might never be mentioned again; and whispered Sophy to contrive an excuse for my quitting the room; for I felt the blood run from my ankle.

Instead of doing as I insisted, she must needs impart the secret to her brother, who was on his knees in a moment, caught my foot in his hand, and saw my slipper, which was of white fattin, quite discoloured with blood.—Her stately ladyship now thought proper to descend from her altitudes, and ask me to withdraw to her dressing-room, where she should order a proper application to be made, though she hoped the dog was not *mad*.

"*Mad or not,*" cried Mr. Courtland with vehemence, "*by my soul she shall not partake of your ladyship's tortures.* With your leave, Sir," to his father, "*I will drive Miss Ackworth home this instant: Brett knows how to make a proper application.*"

The General gave a nod of approbation; and in spight of all my efforts I was

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was obliged to return with him; but to paint his tenderness and anxiety is impossible.

On examining my foot, Brett found several holes, some of which were pretty deep: my ankle was much swoln; and though I made as lightly of it as possible to Mr. Courtland, yet Mrs. Brett's accounts strengthened his fears; and I was condemned close prisoner to the sofa.

I paid him my best thanks for his kindness to me.—“ You owe me nothing, my charming, charming Emmeline,” said he; “ for my peace of mind, be less amiable, nor exert your spirits to entertain me beyond what they are able. To see you ill, my dear friend, would sadden the brightest minutes of my life. I passionately long to lay my whole soul before you; and could I but flatter myself a day would yet come when our mutual happiness shall flow from the same source——”

I looked—I felt embarrassed—I knew not what to do—I begged leave to retire.—“ For worlds,” said he, tenderly pressing my hand, “ I would not part with you.”—At that instant I was happily relieved by the appearance of Mr. Falkner.

On

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On his entrance, the conversation related to my accident: it afforded a relief to my spirits, which were much oppressed by the singularity of Mr. Courtland's behaviour.—Adieu, my dear Madam.

E. ACKWORTH.

LETTER VII.

H. Courtland, Esq; to G. Montrose, Esq.

Roselands.

SINCE I wrote you last, that most mischievous of all animals, called a beau, or coxcomb, is come amongst us. As to its virtues, it has none; for it loses the dignity of its nature in the fopperies of fashion. Such is Lord Roxborough; who has all the vanity of his sister, with not half her understanding; and though he is become my avowed rival for Miss Ackworth's favour, he does not create in my mind a single anxiety. Wou'd to Heaven I had as little to apprehend on the side of Falkner! whose manly conduct, in spight of my fears, challenges my warmest esteem.

Roxbo-

Roxborough flew to me this morning, and swore he was confoundedly in love with my Emmeline; and added, he was surprised how I could so long have stood the fire of her eyes, without surrendering myself captive to her charms.

“ Perhaps my peace might have been in danger of a surprise, my lord, if I had not acted upon the defensive: but don’t hug me so” (he is extremely near-sighted); “ it seems as if you took me for your mistress.”

“ Gadso—*que non*: but we fellows of fashion, you know, Courtland, often assume habits and manners which never fail to set the vulgar a-staring.—I am distractedly in love, my dear boy.”

“ With what, my lord?”

“ A woman, you rogue; lovely—plaguing—blooming—bewitching—”

“ I thought fine gentlemen, my lord, could only love themselves, and that you had forsworn Cupid and the sex, since your unfortunate rupture with the pretty milliner’s husband.”—This alludes to a story that his lordship wishes were well forgotten.

“ Psha—pri’thee, Courtland, didst ever hear of a man of fashion breaking his heart for love?—though, to be sure, never was poor devil so entirely routed.”

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“ Yet,

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“ Yet, faith, my lord, you bear your defeat manfully.”

“ Bravely, bravely, my boy. Why, now, one of your puny, whining, sentimental devils, would have sighed himself to death; whilst I, with that happy *nonchalance* by which pretty fellows are distinguished from the rest of mankind, brushed up my effrontery, and appeared as cool and indifferent the next day as if nothing had happened; and now I feel my bosom in a blaze, from a flash of lightning which burst from the azure optics of Miss Ackworth on my first coming to Darnley.”

“ Indeed!” cried I, foolish enough to feel a transient alarm—“ Does she return your lordship’s passion?”

“ Look at me, Courtland—Do you think it possible that a man of my rank and figure can sigh and languish at the feet of a blooming girl like Miss Ackworth, without making her heart go pit-a-pat?”

“ Your lordship seems sure of your conquest then?—But yet I have some doubts. Now, in case of a refusal, should you not feel a shock?”

“ A shock!—Ha, ha, ha! Don’t you know, Courtland, that a man of the first world can stand the shock of every thing but

but an empty purse? How many d——d fine girls now, d'ye think, have been dying of love for me?"

" It is impossible for me to guess, as your lordship confesses your powers of pleasing to be universal."

" But the dear little Ackworth—faith, she looked so yielding—so blushing—and so, so, so—that egad, not to be surfeited with her fondness, I was obliged to keep her at a distance, to let her know my power."

" 'Sdeath, my lord, another such word, and you'll make me lose all patience. You are the most incorrigible coxcomb——"

" Well, well; no matter for that—the ladies like me the better. So, adieu, adieu;" and, stepping into his phaeton, was out of sight in an instant.

I sauntered into the garden, in hopes to indulge a few minutes with the joy of my heart.

She asked me, if I had seen Lord Roxborough; and intreated me, if I had the least regard for her, I would guard against her ever seeing him alone again.

" *If I have the least regard for you, my lovely friend!—and can you doubt?*

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Can you see the daily anxieties of my mind, and still doubt of my regard?"

O, George, but for Mr. Falkner's presence, I had then laid every secret of my heart before her. But adieu for the present.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER VIII.

Miss Ackworth to Mrs. Aylbert.

Roselands.

A FEW days after my accident at Darnley, Lady Augusta Finleigh called, in order to take me an airing, and to make her apologies for her conduct; saying, she could never so far have forgotten herself, but that her mind had been so particularly agitated on a very disagreeable affair that day, which made her not mistress of herself.

I accepted her ladyship's apology, to shew I was superior to all resentment.

"What a pity it is, my dear Miss Ackworth," said she, "that one human creature

creature should be endowed with attractions like Courtland, to make half our sex miserable. I see, with concern, you have a susceptible heart, and that you are destined to fall a victim, like the rest of us, to his professions of love—whilst his own bosom is incapable of feeling the force of so refined a passion. I own I have loved him with tenderness; and, from the ardour of his addresses, thought my passion returned. But, alas! I soon found my peace was made a sacrifice to his inconstancy: his passion for La Belle Villette, as she was called, was the universal subject of conversation when I arrived at Paris, which was the cause that detained him so long abroad; but her friends, on finding there was nothing serious in his attachment to her, snatched her out of his power; and he soon consoled himself for her loss, by offering his hand to me: but could I accept it till I was well convinced of the sincerity of his professions?—You must have heard with what tender assiduity he pursued my amiable friend Lady Carlton; but she was doomed to share the fate of all the other women with whom he had gallanted, the moment he was convinced he was master of her affections.—And now, my dear Miss Ackworth, I

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tremble for your ignorance of men of the world. I see you at present reign the sole object of his attentions: but tell me candidly, did ever mortal man plead the passion of love with half so much energy?"

I said, I could assure her ladyship, with truth, it was a subject on which Mr. Courtland had never conversed with me, but that he had always looked upon me in the light of a sister; and that I had the regard of a brother for him.

You will easily imagine, dear Madam, that this conversation left a very disagreeable impression on my mind; and when the carriage set me down, I hastened into the garden, to conceal my chagrin. I was thinking of *La Belle Villette*, when Mr. Courtland, almost unperceived, took his seat by me:—a tear stood upon my cheek.

"My sweet Emmeline," said he, "allow me the tender satisfaction of wiping from off your cheek the tear which pity sheds. Why do you tremble thus?—why does your heart throb?—and whence that sigh, which rends my soul?"

But for the information I had just received, I could not have resisted his tenderness.—With all the severity of which I was capable, I said, men of the world

world had always fine speeches at command; for the language of the *lips* flowed more rapidly than the sentiments of the *heart*.

“ What have I said—what have I done,” replied he, “ to merit this unkindness?—Cruel fatality, that the delight of *your* life must consist in making the wretchedness of *mine*!—Yes, Madam, I feel I must be miserable; since, in spight of my cautions, your ear is open to all the malicious insinuations Lady Augusta Finleigh is constantly throwing out against me.”

“ Admitting she had, Sir, the man whose conduct will stand the nicest investigation, need not fear it will be sullied by the cavils of critics.”

“ I own, Madam, I have lived a life of enormity; but whatever may have been my conduct to others, I have ever wished, since I had last the honour of knowing your worth, that it should appear irreproachable to you: and though you have made me wretched, I hold your peace too sacred, ever to molest you with my complaints.” With folded arms he walked from me.

But, good heavens! Madam, what right had I to arraign his conduct?—

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To me he has ever been polite, tender, and affectionate. Should he hate me—should he despise me—never, never could I survive his displeasure!—Adieu.

E. ACKWORTH.

LETTER IX.

H. Courtland, *Esq.*; to G. Montrose, *Esq.*

Roselands.

I HAVE admired and flattered a hundred women, Montrose; but I feel I have never loved but Emmeline!—and she, cruel maid! has amply revenged on me all my infidelities to the sex. In return for my vast excess of fondness, I have only her pity, or contempt, whilst Falkner, the happy Falkner, possesses all her love.

My father, I am well convinced, knows and sees their mutual attachment; and therefore, to guard my bosom from being surprised by her perfections, first thought of presenting her to me as a sister. How I sicken at the idea!

As

As the Darnley family drank tea here, I gaily desired Emmeline to be particularly attentive to her dress, as her admirer, Lord Roxborough, was to be of the party. She begged of me to get her excused from coming down. Pleased that she reposed such a confidence in me, I easily got her petition granted. But, alas! Montrose, I knew not then she was preparing for me the cruelest moments my heart ever sustained.

As soon as the company were gone, I thought to repay myself for the pain her absence cost me, by hurrying to her: but, on the strictest enquiry, she was nowhere to be found!—All the intelligence which could be got was, that she was seen to enter the back-garden with Mr. Falkner, just after tea was carried into the drawing-room. As the night advanced, my mind was in a state of perfect agony. My father and sister were under the most extreme anxiety also; and proposed that I should ride to Dr. Patterson's: but this I refused to do; for if she were there, she might afterwards reproach me, that I was a spy on her actions. A servant was dispatched, and returned without the least intelligence: Mr. Falkner, indeed, was from home. The day had been extremely

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fultry and hot; the clouds began to thicken, and soon discharged themselves in rain; the heavens grew red with lightning, and the thunder rolled tremendously.

“ If my Emmeline has acted imprudently,” said my father, “ she is severely punished by this time; for her dread of thunder and lightning she will never be able to overcome.”

All the servants were dispatched different ways. My own distractions were so great, that I was deprived of the powers of thinking or acting. I believe my father felt little less; but he conducted himself with more prudence.

I traversed the garden, lawn, shrubbery, all her favourite haunts, till I was wet through.—My poor sister was in a state of distraction. I had no comfort to offer her, who was without a single consolation myself.

At length Mr. Falkner appeared, with a countenance not less expressive of astonishment than our own. At sight of him, my sister sprang forward—“ Tell me, tell me, dear Falkner, what you have done with Emmeline?”

He told her, that he had called in the evening to drink tea; but finding there was company, he returned back through

through the shrubbery, determined to visit a family at some miles distance, who had requested to see him; that he met Emmeline in the garden; and after chatting a few minutes with her, took his leave, and went on his visit; where he had been detained by the tempest.

"Then," exclaimed my sister, wringing her hands, "Emmeline, my dearest Emmeline, is dead!" and fainted away. Luckily, Falkner had the presence of mind to catch her in his arms—I had lost all powers of body and mind. I have no recollection of what I said or did.

It was midnight when the gardener returned from a neighbouring town, where he had been on business; and said, that about eight o'clock he had seen Miss Ackworth in the copse (about half a mile from the house), where she was giving directions about a root-house which was building according to her own plan, and in which we had frequently assisted her with our labours.

I waited for no further information, but flew thither with that agitation of mind a man must feel who concludes he is going to embrace certain misery. I had no other idea but of finding her struck dead by lightning! At length I

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reached the root-house, which luckily was partly covered with thatch ; when a strong flash of lightning presented to me my Emmeline funk upon some roots of trees, which had been collected for carrying on her work : her face looked pale —her lips black. “ It is all over then,” cried I : “ Emmeline, my sweet Emmeline, why would not your impatient spirit stay to take me with you ?—As life was no life without you, so dying with you will be pleasure !—But I will warm thy cold face in my bosom ! ”—I caught her in my arms.

“ O, do not be alarmed,” cried she ; “ all will soon be well again. I am not ill—only terrified ! ”

Her sweet languid voice broke on my senses like celestial sounds !—I was frantic with joy to find her still alive !—but it was short-lived, fearing her health was in much danger ; for her linen, which was only of white muslin, was drenched with rain.—In a few words she told me she had strolled hither about sun-set, and after surveying her work, as she was about to return, she found the gate locked by mistake ; that she made every attempt to clamber over the hedges, but found it impracticable : the tempest at this time commencing, she made her way

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way back to the root-house, as offering her the best shelter.

I now attempted to raise her; but her delicate frame had been so shaken with terror, that she could not stand. On hearing the sound of the carriage my prudent father sent after us, I carried her to it.

I shall not stop to paint the pleasure my sister felt, when I delivered up my precious charge to her, whom Falkner, in my absence, had attempted to soothe, but in vain. My father welcomed her with the tenderest caresses; and fearing mine might prove offensive now the danger was past, I bid her adieu for the night, as I shall you.

H. COURTLAND.

P. S. Three days are elapsed since my Emmeline's accident; nor have I seen her yet. She has had a cough and fever; but is better from losing blood.—I will not trouble her with my officious civilities, though I am dying to behold her. She is to quit her apartment tomorrow, when perhaps I may hope—but I will not flatter myself.—I had lost her good opinion before her illness—I have no expectation of regaining it on
her

her recovery. You know not how unkindly she has treated me; but she is better—and I am thankful.

LETTER X.

Miss Ackworth to Mrs. Aylbert.

MY dear Sophia, I find, has informed you of my accident. Thank Heaven, I am better; and should have been well much sooner, but for an oppression which sat heavy at my heart. Lady Augusta Finleigh had placed Mr. Courtland's conduct in such a point of view before me, that I thought him unworthy of that tender friendship which he, with so much ardour, had sought to gain; and which, alas! I found it not in my power now to withhold from him. When I thought him no longer worthy of my esteem, I endeavoured to convince him of it. But how severely has my conduct cost me!—He is silent and dejected; yet he complains not. He is afflicted too with a dreadful cold and hoarse-

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hoarseness, which he caught in seeking me on the night I was detained in the copse. His sister tells me, that during my confinement he never enjoyed a quiet moment, fearing I was worse than she would allow me to be.

The first day I quitted my apartment, the General visited me. He kindly congratulated me on my recovery; and said, that when I was better, he hoped I would prescribe something for his son, for he had neither health nor spirits.

I threw my arms round his neck, and wept on his bosom.—“What is the matter, my dearest child?” cried he. “If you give way to grief, it will retard the recovery of your health.”

“Alas, my dearest Sir,” said I, “my health would soon be restored—it is a troubled conscience only that retards it.”

“A troubled conscience, my dearest life!” embracing me.

“Yes, I have been very, very wicked. I have returned evil, where I owed nothing but gratitude; and I have no hope but in you, my dearest Sir, to assist me in my present difficulties.”

“This confidence charms me, my dearest Emmeline. I have seen your anxiety for some time; and was fearful of enquiring into the motives, lest any part of

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of my son's conduct should have been found reprehensible; but I had not the least idea it was a case of conscience that afflicted you; however, if you will make me a full confession, I will venture to pronounce absolution, before I know the crime"—smiling.—

I then told him the conversation I had had with Lady Augusta Finleigh, and the sad effects her malicious insinuations respecting Mr. Courtland had had upon my mind.—“Now, Sir, if you would but tell Mr. Courtland how severely I have been punished for my fault, and ask him to forgive me, I should be so happy—”

He pressed me to his bosom, called me his dearest child, and said, to be sure my fault was a heinous one, yet hoped, through his mediation, the enormity of it would be lessened in his son's eyes, though he was an inflexible, and not easily subdued by sighs and tears.

Not guessing at his irony, I clasped my hands in the greatest agitation of mind, saying, then I was the most miserable creature breathing.

He kissed away my tears, then gravely shaking his head, said, he must retire to his closet to study the best method to bring about the so-much-desired reconciliation, and withdrew.

I threw

I threw my apron over my face, to shut out the light from my eyes, which had been much weakened by my cold, so that when the General entered a few minutes afterwards, I saw not his son was with him. "Here Courtland," said he, "is a repenting criminal; one too who confesses greatly to have injured you, and who is so overcome by a strong sense of her crime, that she would prefer death rather than live without your forgiveness; and, Courtland, remember that by shewing mercy to the penitent, you add the highest lustre to the Christian name."—He withdrew.

"But first," said Mr. Courtland, "before I proceed to give judgment, let me remove the cloud" (endeavouring to draw aside my apron) "which hides my lovely penitent from my desiring eyes; for well am I convinced, however great may be her fault, my bosom will be disarmed of its ferocity the moment her beauties burst upon me."

"I must not be flattered," said I, "I must only be pardoned."—"Language cannot flatter you, my dearest life," said he; "but if you think my pardon necessary to your peace, receive it in this tender embrace" (pressing me to his bosom); "but henceforward let me entreat

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treat you always to look upon Lady Augusta Finleigh as the common enemy to both. She is of an implacable and vindictive spirit, and therefore prudence requires us to keep only on terms with her."

I thanked him for his advice, and said I would always abide by it.

At this he burst forth into such a torrent of tender exclamation, as quite overwhelmed me with confusion, drawing a very unfair conclusion from what had just escaped me.

As he had kindly assured me of my pardon, I said I had another favour to ask, which I hoped he would grant with the same readiness he had done the former.

Be it what it would, he said, he would not refuse me.

I then begged that when the Doctor called upon me, he would consent to lose a little blood; for his sister told me he was obstinacy itself, that she could not prevail upon him to submit to any regimen, which was absolutely necessary, as his cough was very violent, and attended with copious bleeding at the nose.—He said her anxiety for him greatly over-rated the trifling inconveniences attending a cold, yet, as it was *my request*, he would

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would most readily submit to the operation.

The Doctor came soon after, and said bleeding was highly necessary for him, as it might prevent an inflammation of the lungs.

When the operation was over, he and his sister came arm in arm in search of me. "I have brought my brother back, Emmeline, that you may compliment him," said she; "in a short time, I hope, we shall make him as tame and submissive as any married man in the country."

He was going to make her a reply, when the cough seized him with such violence, that the vein which had been so recently closed burst open, and the blood ran streaming down his arm in torrents. Terror in an instant benumbed my faculties. Sophy screamed, stamped, and rang the bell with violence, whilst her brother attempted to console us both, by saying it was nothing at all; but finding himself growing faint and dizzy, he gently threw himself on the floor, as the most probable method of stopping the blood. I thought him dead: in the transports of my grief I know not what I said or what I did; but this I remember, I threw myself by him,

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him, saying, "it is I that have killed him, but I will die for it."

Guess the General's astonishment, who came in a moment after: at first he apprehended a dreadful catastrophe; but, being informed of the cause, he had presence of mind to unloose the bandage which tied up his son's arm, and the blood ceased instantly. They tell me for a long time I discovered no symptoms of life; but, on coming to myself, what a scene of tender concern did I behold around me! and how elated was my heart to see the amiable cause of my anxiety perfectly restored, and feeling only pain for me! How can I reward such tenderness? O tell me, Madam, is excess of gratitude a crime, for the too indulgent partiality of Mr. Courtland for your

E. ACKWORTH?

LETTER XI.

Lady Augusta Finleigh to Lady Carlton.

Darnley.

WE fight against our stars, my dear Lady Carlton, when we fight without success. My seeds are sown in a bad soil ; I reap only the harvest of discontent, and whenever I throw the ball of vengeance, the rebound is sure to strike my own breast. Courtland is inevitably lost to us all ; that baby-faced girl has made a mere husband of him already ; he neither looks, speaks, nor thinks, but as she gives the nod of approbation.

Though I believe he hates me, yet he has enough of the courtier in him always to wear the smile of complacency whenever we meet ; and though it be not in my power to give him pleasure, yet the means of giving him pain are still left me.

We lately spent the day at Roselands, and, do you know, my foolish brother pretends to be as much enamoured of this Emmeline, for whom we have been all slighted, as Courtland is. After dinner a walk was proposed by him into

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into the fields, merely to get Miss Ackworth to himself; but Courtland, proud wretch! is too sensible of his own superiority, to feel the least sensation of jealousy on my brother's account. Be it as it will, I had this advantage from it, for it secured him to me for more than an hour. Mr. Falkner, whom I have often mentioned to you, gallant Miss Courtland.

At length we rambled into a beautiful meadow, enamelled with a thousand different flowers, surrounded by a brook, where the gentlemen often go a-fishing. After surveying the trout glide through the crystal fluid, we began making nosegays, first appointing Courtland to judge whose should bear away the prize of merit.

He gave it all to nothing in favour of Miss Ackworth; her flowers being so nicely arranged, and the light and shade so happily blended, that the group formed a complete picture.

"I'll grant you, Courtland," said I, "that Miss Ackworth's makes the completer whole, but I think mine has the superiority in sweetness; I should have told you, that seeing a bee nestling in the bell of a cowslip, I slipt it into the centre of my bouquet, then pressing the

flowers to Miss Ackworth's nose, the little insect, offended at the pressure, stung her a little below the right eye and then flew off."—"Bless me," said she, "the bee, I believe, has left its sting in my cheek," rubbing it.—"D—n the flowers," cried Courtland, dashing them to the ground, "whatever is beautiful is full of deceit; your ladyship must have known the insect was there."

"Surely," returned I, "*you* could not suspect *me* of so mischievous an intention." The girl, to do her justice, behaved incomparably well, said it was nothing, and begged we might continue our walk; but the inflammation soon spread itself half over her face, at which Courtland grew frantic, and would suffer no one but himself to apply any remedy to it; she must have endured great pain, though she affected much indifference.

I was ready to murder myself, that my malevolent intentions had procured the creature so much tender anxiety, and so many minute attentions from Courtland; I would have given both eyes to have been so soothed, so caressed!

The next day politeness led me to enquire after Courtland's blind pet: his sister received me with great cordiality, and attended me to Miss Ackworth's dressing-

dressing-room, where I beheld a sight that nearly maddened my brain, the lord of my heart fondly hanging over his girl, reading to her, whilst her head, which was bound with a white handkerchief, rested on a pillow, one eye totally blind. The insolent wretch never had the manners to rise on my entrance, but waved his hand to me to sit down ; I obeyed in silence.

General Courtland, who is one of the best-bred men in the world, yet nevertheless as much a dupe to this girl as his son, at length broke the awful silence, when advancing and kissing her hand with a truly paternal tenderness, he said to me, “ Your ladyship cannot imagine how this little accident has deranged us all ; for whatever happens to one of my children, becomes a source of grief to the rest. My poor Harry and Sophy have absolutely passed the day in lamentations for this disaster which has befallen their little favourite : ” then turning to Miss Ackworth, and pressing her hands, “ I think, my love, you are more feverish than you were in the morning.”

She assured him, on the contrary, she was much better, but the son was certain she was worse, and obliged her to take some lemonade.

The

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The General then said, if she thought it would not fatigue her spirits, we would drink tea with her ; she assented to his proposal with seeming pleasure, till her peremptory lover absolutely put a negative upon it, by assuring her she was too weak to bear the fatigue of so much company ; that he should make tea for her himself, and the sooner it was brought up the better.

I know, from long experience, that one might as well alter a decree of the Medes and Persians, as make him forego an opinion ; and therefore I retired as soon as possible from a scene which planted daggers in my heart. But for my own folly, the tender caresses which Courtland bestowed on his Emmeline, might all have devolved on your ever faithful

A. FINLEIGH.

LETTER XII.

H. Courtland, Esq. to G. Montrose, Esq.

DEAR GEORGE,

I CALL for thy congratulations on my present happy prospects. A trifling accident which befel me has been productive of the most exquisitely happy moments of my life, as it has unfolded to me the hidden secrets of my Emmeline's bosom, where thy friend sits high enthroned, the sovereign lord of her wishes. The loved idea maddens me with transport.

But to the subject of subjects ; having caught a violent cold in her service, to ease her anxiety I consented to lose a little blood, but the cough returning before the vein was closed, occasioned such a discharge of blood, that she concluded, I suppose, an artery had been opened, and that my death was inevitable. What a distracted frenzy seized her mind : "He will die, he will die!" cried she, wringing her hands, "and never know how much I —" Here she paused for want of breath—then again exclaiming, "I will die too. O blessed exchange for life and

and misery!" No argument which either my sister or self used, could mitigate her terror because the blood continued still to flow; she sunk down by me on the floor, and in an instant was lost to all sense of recollection. This proved a styptic, for my blood iced with fear, and instantly ceased to flow. What a subject of tender sorrow had I before me, till the pulses of nature resuming their functions, reanimated my hopes, and restored my angel to my prayers. Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XIII.

Mrs Ackworth to Mrs. Aylbert.

Roselands.

WITH fear and trembling I look up to my most revered friend, as well for compassion as advice, and if, on the most important event of my life, I have not acquitted myself agreeably to your wishes, I submit to your censures, and promise in future to be entirely guided by you.

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We

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We were preparing to dine at Darnley, when Lord Roxborough and his sister drove up in his phaeton. "Do you know, Courtland," said his lordship, "I intend to exchange sisters with you on our return to Darnley: for, hang me, if the company of one's sister is not the next dull thing to that of a wife!"

Mr. Courtland very gallantly said, he would with pleasure accept his offer, but he was not at all disposed to make an exchange, till he had a better opinion of his lordship's prudence, as a charioteer: "For," added he, "I have often heard you declare, Roxborough, you love to hurry the sex into danger, because fear gave them new beauties."

"Say what you will, Courtland, I will not be deprived the satisfaction of driving Miss Ackworth to Darnley; and I'll bet you one hundred guineas, my ponies shall outrun your's."

"I'll take your bet with all my heart," rejoined he, "when we are by ourselves, but now the safety of the ladies depends upon our prudence, I durst not engage in so hazardous an enterprise."

Mr. Courtland, though with great reluctance, was obliged to resign me to this foolish lord; and, as his own carriage

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riage was much larger, took charge of the other two ladies ; the General was to follow with Mr. Falkner on horseback.

We soon got the start of Mr. Courtland, and then his lordship began to entertain me with the most frothy nonsense imaginable ; he called me an angel, and said he was downright in love with me.

“ I am sorry for it, my lord, yet I can scarcely believe you.”

“ Why, surely, you don’t doubt my sincerity.”

“ What shall I say then to persuade you ?”

“ Nothing, my lord,” coldly.

“ Shall I swear you are as handsome as an angel ?”

“ No, my lord ; for I have heard a hundred men swear the same thing” (pardon my seeming vanity, but I never keep any measures with him).

“ The devil you have.”

“ Don’t swear, my lord—but swearing is the characteristic of all libertines.”

“ I hope, Miss Ackworth, you have discovered no more of that character in me than a little slight dash, just enough to recommend me to the favour of the ladies ; ha, ha, ha ! for to ensure my success with them, I was obliged to dis-

card my modesty, as it was perpetually exposing me to their ridicule, and in exchange have taken up the current coin of the times—flattery—flattery, my dear creature."

We just then entered the Park gate when the other carriage came in view; his frolicsome lordship kept whipping the horses, till they became as frolicsome as their driver. They began to rear and prance, when his lord gave the carriage a jerk suddenly, they by which we were instantly overthrown. The ridiculous appearance we made, tossed different ways amongst the newly mown grass, threw me into such a fit of laughter, that Mr. Courtland, on seeing our disaster, sprung out of his carriage to my assistance, concluding I was in a hysterick fit: his apprehensions (for I was not in the least hurt) served to increase my mirth; and, as soon as I could convince him I had received no injury, he joined the laugh with me, but it was quite otherwise with the poor lord, who looked mortally chagrined.

Mr. Courtland handed Lady Augusta and his sister from their carriage, and we walked up to the house. Her ladyship observing Mr. Courtland's spirits still hurried

hurried from the late accident, said, "Upon my word, Mr. Courtland, I never thought before you had any sensibility."

"To suppose me divested of sensibility," said he, "is doing the highest injury to my feelings. Sensibility, Madam, ennobles and dignifies the man; and human nature without it, is but a mass of coarse materials, alike insensible of the pleasures of friendship, or the more tender sensations of love, which, I flatter myself, few men have felt in a greater degree," fixing his eyes upon me.

"We shall bring my brother to confess something at last," said Sophy, "but he is the most secret wretch breathing in his amours; is he not, Emmeline?"

"Perhaps," said I, "he may be only secret, because you are so fond of prattle. I dare say, had he a better opinion of your discretion, he would be more communicative."

"Thank you, my dear Miss Ackworth," said he, "for this generous vindication of me; and to convince her that I have an unbounded confidence in my youngest sister's prudence, if she will walk with me to yonder seat, I will tell her every secret of my heart" (taking my hand), "and leave her at full liberty

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either to disclose or retain them, as she shall judge proper."

Sophy insisted on my getting at the secret; Mr. Courtland drew me forward; I retreated back.—" You see," said her ladyship, " Miss Ackworth is afraid to trust herself with you, and she is much in the right on't; for what woman in the bloom of her youth and beauty could bear (from a fine fellow) to hear of the perfections of another?"

" Did you never hear, Madam," returned he, " of a coquette's breaking her heart to indulge her pride?"

" No," retorted she, sarcastically enough; " but I have known a thousand men, who, when once convinced of a woman's partiality for 'em, have grown vain upon it, and insulted a tenderness which men of honour would have gratefully cherished."

Though much of the like conversation passed, yet we spent not an unpleasant day.

I was surprised to see Mr. Courtland's post-chaise when we were to return in the evening; on asking the reason, I found he had sprained his wrist in leaping from his phaeton in the morning, when he came to my assistance, which rendered him incapable of driving. As he never mentioned his accident during the day, for

for fear of giving us pain, his hand was very much swollen, and the next day he was quite deprived of the use of it.

We were to meet the Darnley family at Dr. Patterson's at tea; but Mr. Courtland begged his excuses might be made, for he found he wanted spirits to engage in general conversation: his sister said she would with pleasure resign her visit, if she could by any means promote his amusement.

"No, Sophy," said the General, "that's a task which ought more properly to devolve on Emmeline; as your brother got the accident which confines him, in her service, I think she can do no less than exert the pretty arts of which she is mistress, for his diversion; what say you, Courtland?"

"That I ask no dearer boon of Heaven," cried he, impatiently hurrying me into the saloon as the carriage drove off. "Now, now, my dearest Emmeline," said he, "is the blest moment arrived when you can render me a most essential service."

"I said I should be always happy to oblige him."

"Charming, generous girl, then I have a letter of the utmost importance to write, and you see how I'm disabled."

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"I will

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“ I will with pleasure,” said I, “ accept the honour of being your amanuensis” (catching up the pen), “ if you can trust the subject of your letter to my keeping.”

“ I am well convinced you can keep a secret,” said he, “ though I will leave you at full liberty to disclose mine as soon as I know my letter has been received in the manner I could wish.”

“ You must not be surprised, my dear friend,” continued he, “ if you see me uncommonly agitated, as the good or ill of my future life will depend upon the answer I shall receive to the letter I am about to beg the favour of you to transcribe for me.”

“ Heavens!” said I, “ if it be of that importance, I wish you would employ some other pen” (mine then dropped from my fingers); “ for the seriousness of your air and manner have given me such a tremor—”

“ I am sorry for it,” said he, “ but you must oblige me” (replacing the pen); “ and now, if you can, my dear Miss Ackworth, paint to the charmer of my heart, as sincere a passion as ever glowed in the bosom of man.”

“ Then you must excuse me,” said I; “ for I never wrote a love letter in my life.”

life."—"Don't be alarmed," said he, "I will dictate to your pen."—"In that case," rejoined I, "I may be able to serve you."—"Well, Sir, I am ready." He sat leaning over me.—The letter was as follows :

MY DEAREST MADAM,

"AS real merit is ever unconscious of its value, it has rendered all the indirect applications I have hitherto made for your favour fruitless. Whilst the world is dazzled with your perfections, you alone appear to be unconscious of their power.

"Believe me, dearest creature, I love you with an ardour, a sincerity that has few examples. In admiring you, I first learnt to reverence virtue, and, O be speedy to tell me, whilst *you* warmed my bosom with your virtues, if your own ne'er felt a sympathetic glow.

"I feel too much to be eloquent on a subject on which my happiness depends ; the simple language of the heart, wants not the pompous diction of words to give it pathos : yes, best of women, I love you more than life ; confirm my hopes and tax my gratitude, and permit me, when next we meet, to demand of you a heart which the Virtues have marked

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for their own.—In the mean time, I have the honour to subscribe myself your faithfully devoted

COURTLAND."

With some difficulty he made his signature with his left-hand. I folded up this redoubtable letter. He said, he believed he could write the address himself; when it was done, he presented it to me. I said, I would ring for the servant, to carry it directly to the post.

"Pardon me, my dearest Miss Ackworth," said he; "but you will much oblige me by keeping it till you see the person to whom it is directed."

I threw my eyes upon it, and saw it was to myself!—Judge, Madam, of my confusion. I could only say, "What have you done, Sir?"

"The only piece of treachery, my dearest life," added he, "of which I hope you will ever find me guilty. Tell me, is it possible you could thus long have been spectator of my behaviour without feeling the motive by which I was actuated?"

"You have both surprised and distressed me, Sir. I did not expect—"

"What

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“ What did you not expect, my charming Emmeline?—This declaration cannot be new to you, since every action of my life must have evinced to you how much you were its darling object. Say, have I not—”

“ I can only say, Sir, I am totally unworthy the honour you do me.—I know little of the world—less of mankind: teach me but how to do my duty, and I will ever look upon you as the best, the most indulgent of friends.”

“ And of lovers too, my sweet Emmeline.”

“ Yes; provided you, Sir,” said I, “ will be content with such love as the most affectionate of sisters owes to the best of brothers. Under that character, you have deservedly won my confidence; and under that character let me entreat for a continuance of it.—I could not bear your displeasure—indeed I could not—it would soon break my heart:” tears stood in my eyes—I paus’d.

“ Why do you pause, dearest creature?” taking my hands: “ if I bring over my father and sister to my cause, could you then renounce the brother for a nearer, a more tender relation?”

Confused

Confused to the last degree, I could only conjure him not to think me ungrateful.

“ Am I not the obliged person, my dear friend ?” said he. “ Do I not covet a treasure kings might be proud to possess ?”

“ If you flatter me, Sir, you will give me room to doubt the sincerity of your professions. Return again to the world, and you will soon find a woman capable of adding lustre to the rank in which you will place her : I am without rank — without fortune — and without other connection than what I derive from your family. Weigh well these reasons, Sir, and you will see how much more I have *your* honour at heart than *my own* advantage.”

“ Good heavens !” added he, “ and is it thus you reason with a passion sincere and glowing as mine ? But you love me not—and I am lost to hope—I have deceived myself—I thought I was beloved ! Think, dearest girl, the transport I have felt, whilst my bosom cherished the too fond idea—and can you resolve to renounce me for ever ?—Yet say my happiness is dear to you — But do you think that time, assisted by my increasing

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increasing assiduities, can work any change of sentiment in you?"

"Alas! Sir," said I, scarcely knowing what I said, "I fear not—it is not in my power to change them, whatever my conduct may prove."—He totally misconceived me, and appeared extremely hurt.

The arrival of the General was a great relief to me. Mr. Courtland retired soon after; and left me at liberty to write thus far.

How to conduct myself in my present situation I know not. If I could make the son happy, without wounding the feelings of the father—what a delightfully pleasing task!

The General may have other views for him; and shall I, the child of his tenderest affection, as he is often pleased to call me, shall I return his truly paternal regard by suffering his son to do an action unworthy of him!—No, Madam, I can dare be unhappy, but I never will be unjust. Adieu.

E. ACKWORTH.

LETTER XIV.

H. Courtland, *Esq.*; to G. Montrose, *Esq.*

Roselands.

FATE, my dear Montrose, has given the blow which decides the lot of your friend. I am rejected by Emmeline!—and though I never can be her's, I shall still have one satisfaction left, that of subscribing myself your's most sincerely,

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XV.

Miss Ackworth to Mrs. Aylbert.

Roselands.

NEVER again, dear Madam, shall I enjoy that sweet tranquillity of mind I did before Mr. Courtland declared himself to me. I feel as if I were acting with duplicity towards both father and son. I carefully avoid all opportunities

nities of conversing with the latter alone ; yet my mind is somewhat relieved since I have laid the whole affair before Sophy. But she, instead of pitying, only laughs at my embarrassment ; and tells me, I ought to think myself extremely happy, as times go, in such a lover.

The dear General went this morning to visit the old Earl of Courtland, whose dissolution will cause a strange alteration in this family. Alas ! Lord Ormsley can never be dearer to me than Mr. Courtland. I think the change greatly more to be feared than wished for.

I was going to tell you, the General, before he went, begged me to attend him a few minutes in his library. I followed trembling, because I felt myself guilty.

“ I want to talk with you, my dear child,” said he, “ on a subject of the highest importance to you.” (I was ready to expire.)—“ Don’t be alarmed,” continued he, “ I have nothing to say to give you pain. Many years are elapsed since you lost a father, who was an ornament to human nature : his last effort of life was to recommend you to my protection. ‘ There is a friend of mine,’ continued your father, ‘ who has a son, a lad of fine promise, if the world does not spoil him as he gets farther advanced

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vanced in life: till my Emmeline is of a proper age to be introduced to him, be you, Mr. Courtland, a father to my orphan. But should this projected marriage prove contrary to the feelings of her heart, it is my dying request that no force be put upon her inclinations.'—
I have seen the young gentleman," continued the General, "and am well pleased to find he has much distinguished himself in life; that he is handsome in his person, graceful in his manners, and has a mind, as young men go, tolerably accomplished. Next winter, I hope to present him to you, in the character of a lover: but in the mean time remember you are left to make a free choice." Then tenderly embracing me, withdrew; but returned again in a few minutes with his son, saying, "I leave you here, my dear Courtland, to act in the double capacity of father and brother. Your sister Emmeline wants consolation"—putting my hand into his.

"Wou'd to Heaven, Sir," said he, tenderly pressing it, "it were in my power to give it; but lately I have lost all the little influence over her I once thought I possessed."

"Courage, my boy," said he, smiling; "and remember the old proverb, that

that *Faint heart never won fair lady*"—then, with the best grace in the world, threw himself into his post-chaise. But what followed afterwards, must be reserved for the subject of another letter. Adieu.

E. ACKWORTH.

LETTER XVI.

H. Courtland, *Esq.*; to G. Montroie, *Esq.*

Roselands.

HOW many dull rogues have acquired the appellation of philosophers, by pleading indifference to objects they wanted taste to admire!

If I am not as happy as I wish, at least I am less miserable than I was. Though I have pleaded my passion, and was refused, yet the rejection came from one whose mind is the seat of all the virtues. Yes, George, I swear my sweet girl loves me, tenderly loves me, whatever may be the motives for her conduct.

Our old uncle, the Lord Courtland, now the jaws of death have stuck their fangs in him, wants to make a reconciliation

ciliation with my father for his past neglect of him; who is gone off post. But perhaps before he reaches Ormsley Castle, he may be in possession of both title and fortune, which this old trunk of disease and avarice could no longer withhold from him.

Before my father sat off, he dragged me into his closet, where sat *his* and *my* Emmeline, seemingly oppressed by some inward chagrin; and recommended her to my care, in the double capacity of father and brother—“*And wou'd I could add a third character, my dear Miss Ackworth,*” said I, as soon as he was withdrawn, “that of a lover also. Only promise me that you will behave towards me with your usual frankness, and I give you my word of honour not to importune you again, at least for a time, on a subject which I fear will never meet with your entire approbation.”

“And can you—will you be so indulgent to my foibles?” said she. “You know not, Sir, how much such generous conduct touches my heart, which cannot be ungrateful: and only promise me that what has lately passed between us shall be held a secret from your father, till some circumstances are changed—and then there is not a secret thought I possess

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I possess that I will withhold from you."

"I do promise—I will promise any thing," said I, "which you can ask—unless it be not to love you—for then I should add perjury to falsehood."

She smiled.—My sister entered.
"Upon my word, brother," said she,
"you make a very pretty lover-like appearance. But you would have less reason to look kindly on Emmeline, if you knew she had been laying an artful scheme to rob you."

"To rob me, Sophy!—I had nothing to lose but my heart; and that has been long in her possession."

"But do you set no value on her person?—If she had robbed you of that!"

"Why then I should have been a bankrupt indeed—and all my future days would have been tinged with the sable hue of misery!—But, dearest girl, tell me by what means I should have lost her?—for the bare idea makes me almost breathless."

"Why," continued she, "whatever secrets Emmeline may wish to conceal from you, to me she has none; and therefore, after all the soft nonsense you have been saying to her, she would have bribed me to procure my father's interest

to

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to let her go and spend a month with Mrs. Aylbert."

" Dearest Emmeline! and could you thus cruelly plot to rob me of my peace? But what said my father?"

" If not this, at least something to the same purpose," rejoined she—" That if the turtle was left without his mate, he would soon cease *cooing*."

" Most truly guessed. But some punishment is due to my Emmeline for her wicked intentions, though they have been so happily frustrated."

" I have it, I have it," replied Sophy: " don't mention the word *love* to her for as long a time as she would have secreted herself from you."

" Then you must deprive me, Sophy, of the faculty of seeing—thinking—and acting; for if she be present, I can talk no other language."

" Love," replied my charmer, " is a language soon learnt and soon forgotten."

" Not," cried I, snatching her to my heart, " if the lesson be frequently repeated."

O, George, what a scene of innocent delight now opens to my enraptured imagination!—Whilst I trace the intricate mazes of her heart, to surprise her

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holding a parley between passion and prudence, at the same time looking upon myself as the grand engineer who sets all the secret springs of her soul in motion.
Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XVII.

To the Same.

MY father is returned from Lord Courtland's. It seems the grizzly monster, Death, has given him a lease of a few months, to see if, in that short space, he can make peace with Heaven, for a vicious life of more than threescore and ten years.

Lord Finleigh breakfasted with us. As soon as the ladies were withdrawn, his lordship, addressing my father and self, said, he wished to have a few minutes private conversation with us.

What the devil, thought I, is the old peer come to borrow money!—But I was soon undeceived, as you shall hear; for his business was neither more nor

nor less than to make me an offer of his daughter.

I told his lordship, I supposed he must have heard it was an honour I once aspired after; but as she then thought proper to refuse me, I did not find that time had rendered me more worthy of her regard.

His lordship then said, that such conduct could be only deemed childish folly; that young ladies, to shew their power, generally treated those worst whom they most esteemed.

"I will not, my lord," returned I, "pretend to vindicate the conduct of either. I am much obliged to your lordship for your intentions in my favour; and therefore candour compels me to tell you, that, were Lady Augusta disposed to accept of my hand, I have not a heart to give with it; and moreover, my lord, she who possesses it, in my eye, unites all the perfections of her sex. Yet she is proud, very proud; for though she knows she has my whole soul in her keeping, yet she gives me not a shadow of consolation in return. And yet, my lord, I take more delight, amidst the profoundest retirement, in tracing out her perfections, than in the society of the finest women in the world."

My

My father declared himself flattered by his lordship's offered alliance; but said, he had always determined never to interfere with his children's inclinations, as they were of an age when they could best judge for themselves in an affair which was of the utmost importance to their future peace. "Let honour, my dear son," continued he, "be the fountain from whence all your actions spring; and if the end be not always productive of happiness, your conscience at least will be free from reproach."

His lordship (why will peers lie, whose word is their oath!) said, his daughter was entirely ignorant of the intentions of his visit; and my father and I both requested she should ever remain so.

He took his leave soon after, as I shall of you. Dear George, thine ever,

H. COURTLAND.

P. S. I forgot to tell you, I lingered about the whole morning, wishing my father would have questioned me on the state of my heart; and that he might also have requested the name of the object of my love; for, bound by promise as I am now to Emmeline, I durst not otherwise have divulged it.

LETTER XVIII.

To the Same. (In continuation.)

THE next day I returned his lordship's visit at Darnley, willing he should see I was under no restraint from our last conversation. He was gone an airing: I saw only Lady Augusta. She blushed and looked much agitated on my entrance; which I most humanely attributed to illness, not disappointment. Don't call me coxcomb, George.

"I have been thinking, Mr. Courtland," said she, "of the many happy days we spent in France together."

I hoped all succeeding ones would be equally propitious to her ladyship.

"Don't you think, Courtland, I am grown quite a grave domestic creature to what I was then?"

"True, Madam; and I don't think your ladyship has lost by the exchange."

"I wont be flattered now—indeed I wont."

"It shall always be my pleasure to act agreeably to your ladyship's wishes. I will not flatter you then"—kissing her hand.

"You

“ You are an encroaching creature, Courtland—Be quiet,” tapping my shoulder—“ Do you know I am amazingly struck with the simplicity of Miss Ackworth’s dress and address. I wish I could copy her.”

“ That would be spoiling a charming original,” cried I. “ Though both are excellent in the degree, the graces of the one would never fit easy on the other: the amiable simplicity of Miss Ackworth’s manners are born with her; the higher bred graces of your ladyship are caught from a Court—and will always attract the multitude, whilst the unadorned simplicity of the other will only catch the individual.”

“ Ah! that individual,” exclaimed she, “ may have more intrinsic worth than all the coxcombs which buzz about a drawing-room. I have a great notion, Courtland, that beauty never wounds so surely as when it appears least conscious of its power.”

“ I can only say, Madam, that a coquet adorned for conquest, with all the insolence of beauty, never made an impression on my mind for an hour together.”

She bit her lip. We were interrupted; and glad was I to escape; for I know her

to be haughty—vain—insolent—jealous ; and therefore it behoves me sometimes to wear the face of complaisance towards her, lest her resentment should fall on the person least able to bear it—my gentle Emmeline—to whom I flew immediately on my return. I found her sitting under the large walnut-tree facing the saloon, where I have enjoyed many an interesting conversation with her : taking my place by her without being perceived, I whispered in her ear, that I could no longer drag on existence unless the toils of life were sometimes cheered with her smiles.

“ Remember the conditions, Sir.”

“ I do, my sweet girl ; but you yourself are the cause I do not always abide by them.”

“ I, Sir, tempt you to break the conditions !”

“ Yes, my best Emmeline ; for whilst you exhibit perfections which dazzle the senses, can you be surprised that I should sometimes blunder when I have lost my reason ?—This wicked scheme of yours, of flying to Mrs. Aylbert, deserves a heavier chastisement than even I am willing to inflict on you. However, if you get my father’s consent, I will not deny you mine ; for I flatter myself I should be

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be a welcome guest to her also; nay, I have written to her, that she cannot possibly receive the one without the other."

This threw her into a most delightful fit of passion; for which I should almost have devoured her, had she not fled to Mr. Falkner for protection, who just then made his appearance.

It gave me a sickishness at my heart ; but I durst not complain, unless I had more substantial cause for my doubts.— Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XIX.

To the Same.

Courtland Manor.

NOTHING less, dear George, than the revolutions which have happened within the last few weeks, could have urged me to date from hence.

My father one day, finding me in a very contemplative mood, said, that as I had declared my heart had made its election in favour of a wife, it was highly

necessary I should look into my affairs, and examine the state of my house in Warwickshire, which must be in great want of alterations, as more than forty years had elapsed since it had known a mistress.

I said in reply, there was nothing I so much wished for as to become a domestic man, if the woman I preferred to all others would venture with me to the land of matrimony.

"There is no knowing, Courtland," added he, "some women's minds.—Come, pluck up, and let us set off to the Manor to-morrow?"

"Good God, Sir!" (starting) "that is impossible; for, in the mean time, what will become of Emmeline?" I felt the imprudence of my speech, and really blushed for it.

"Why," said he, "as you do not intend to take your sister with you, they will be company for each other; and we will get Mr. Falkner to keep up their spirits in our absence."

"Mr. Falkner, Sir!—Had we not better ask him to be of *our* party?—He always professes himself happy to oblige me: I am certain he won't refuse; and if he should, you know we may pretty well guess at the reason."

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“To be sure,” rejoined he; “for, knowing your journey is a mere matter of business, he would not suffer himself to be a tax upon *your* time to entertain *him*.”

“If I thought that were the reason, I should honour him for his good sense; but—but—if you think his company will be agreeable to my sisters, I will say no more.”

We were to have left Roselands by six in the morning; had I not formed many causes for delay, to get one glimpse more of my Emmeline; for when I took leave of her the preceding evening, I flattered myself that a tender melancholy had taken possession of every charming feature. My father was very attentive to my emotions; tho’ he said nothing to hasten me; and kindly desired I would take my own time. At length the pride of my life appeared, and expressed her surprise at seeing me, when she concluded me twenty miles on my journey; and kindly asked what occasioned this delay.

“Why do you ask me, my charming girl?—Consider what a charge I leave behind me: in leaving you, I leave all that’s valuable to me on earth. What is my fortune in Warwickshire to my sweet Emmeline in Dorset?”

“ If then,” added she, “ you would have me believe your professions sincere, I hope what I have to say to you will have its due weight. You must leave me instantly: exert yourself in settling your affairs, which, by your own account, are in great disorder; and, as I can’t assist you in your undertaking, I will promise to think of you all day; and in the evening, when you sit down to rest from your labours, I will then permit you to suffer a thought to stray to Roselands, which shall find a gracious welcome in my bosom.”

“ One tender farewell then,” said I, “ and I obey.”—I took it; and as I was hastening from her, I met Wilson, who said, “ La, Sir, you had better pluck up courage, and be off at once; for the sooner we go the sooner we shall return. We all know the cause of your delay; for we have seen a certain young lady wipe her eyes more than once since yesterday.”

“ What, Wilson?—My——” I stopped. The whole house, at this rate, must be in possession of a secret I thought safe locked in my own breast. However, elated with the tender assurances of my angel’s kind remembrance of me, I sat off

off with more fortitude; and here I am, George, a shameful instance of folly and extravagance. When I reflect on my past life, it seems to me that Heaven has granted me uncommon mercies, to try whether I had the grace to use them, or the power to abuse them.

But for the care of the best of fathers, my fortune, ample as it is, would ere this have been most miserably shattered; for, provided my extravagancies were supplied, I cared not if I spent principal as well as interest.

I no sooner formed the resolution of coming hither, than I wrote to my steward, who, by the bye, I never saw, to prepare his accounts ready for our inspection; but, to our surprise, we found he had absconded with more than six thousand pounds, the rents of my estate for the last year; for as I have lived so long, as I may say, secluded from the world, I was not under the necessity of drawing upon him.

Alas, every body condoles with me on my loss: but if they knew the right cordial to soothe my dejected spirits, they would talk to me of my charming Emeline. I have not yet counted the exact number of miles which part us.

What a reproach do I now stand to those misjudging friends who had the direction of my youth. They loaded me with wealth, without teaching me the first rudiments of discretion. I have been extravagant, without knowing what it was to be generous. I have squandered more money in the society of a set of profligates, than would have saved the whole neighbourhood from want for half a century to come: and yet I had always the character of being a noble, generous fellow, merely because I had the power of adding splendour to vice.

My passions, by nature strong, gathered force from knowing no resistance; so that at length they began to sicken me with disgust. My pleasures were those of sense, not of soul. I formed friendships without affection, and amours without satisfaction. I played high, whilst I detested the vice; and I dreaded the ridicule of scoundrels more than the vengeance of Heaven!

In the midst of lawyers, tenants, petitioners, bills, bonds, leases, &c. &c. I affect to look mighty wise and mighty studious; but know no more whose pretensions are right or wrong, than the man in the moon. However, I give them

them all kind words; with which they are mightily pleased; and order for them good entertainments, which they like still better.

Adieu—I am just going into the garden to breathe a sigh towards my Emeline. Who knows but, even in Falkner's society, she still remembers there exists such a being as thy

COURTLAND.

LETTER XX.

General Courtland to Miss Courtland.

Courtland Manor.

WHEREVER I am, my Sophy will hold that place in her fond father's affection to which her dutiful attachment to him so justly entitles her.

I have a tale to tell you, my love,
which will awaken all your tenderness.
You have long loved your brother with-
out knowing his virtues: you will now
glory in him on the discovery. The
seeds of honour have not been extinct in
his soul; they only lay uncultivated till

a proper season called them forth into existence.

The steward, Anderson, by the activity of Sir John Fielding's men, is taken, and great part of the money will be recovered ; but the unhappy wretch, who feared to meet an *earthly* judge, has, by an act of suicide, dared to rush unbidden into the presence of his *Heavenly* one.

But to the subject in point.—Yesterday, after breakfast, my dear boy begged I would give him half an hour of my company in the library. We were no sooner seated, than taking a sealed parcel from his bosom, dropping on one knee, he presented it to me. It was a deed he had had drawn up by his lawyer, whereby he put me in possession of the greater part of his estate.

I could not speak my astonishment.

“ I am thankful, my dear and honoured Sir,” said he, “ that I have lived to see the present moment, which enables me to do an act of justice that ought to have been done many years since. The unjust caprice of my uncle robbed you of your lawful inheritance, in favour of one whose only wish is now to live dependant on your will.—I have long intended to make my sister some acknowledgment

ledgment of my affection: I have therefore made a reserve of six thousand pounds, which I intend to present to her. She has a truly benevolent heart, and has a thousand claims upon it, which she will now be enabled to indulge without looking up to you, Sir, for assistance."

True courage, my Sophia, is not incompatible with the softness of humanity. I have often met ten thousand armed men in the field, without an emotion; but here nature was overcome—My tears fell on the bosom of your brother as I embraced him.

"Never, never, my dearest Harry," said I, "will I deprive you of your unquestionable right: take back again this testimony of your affection" (giving him the deed): "my own fortune, though not large, I have divided—the greater part between my two girls, reserving something for you, only as an acknowledgment of my regard: your uncle Courtland's fortune will support your title with splendour when it comes.—I much approve your intentions in favour of your sister: she deserves them of you. As for myself, my Henry, I never wish to be regarded by my children but as their friend and counsellor. I have

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have felt hardships which only patience could have overcome, and which religion enabled me to support. The happiest life will find its alloy of pain—a mind subdued by disappointments is best calculated to meet the storms of life—and a soul upheld by religion is best enabled to support them."

I could say no more; but instantly left the dear youth to subdue, unobserved, those agitations which I saw were almost too powerful for him to combat with.

Tell my much loved Emmeline, when she next sees her brother, to endeavour, by her affectionate tenderness towards him, to lessen, in some measure, this last great obligation I owe him: and tell her also, that I believe he has lost all his gaiety for want of her enlivening vivacity. He has no spirits, grows languid, and has lost all taste for gardening, since he left his amiable distress. I tell him his garden wants laying out in better taste; but he says he shall not attempt altering it, for nobody has real taste but Emmeline.

He looks paler, and is much thinner than usual. I believe a little relaxation from business will be necessary, to give him a fresh recruit of spirits. I will think upon it.

Adieu,

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Adieu, my dear girl. But do not forget to present my most affectionate compliments to Mr. Falkner: and believe me your affectionate father,

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXI.

Miss Ackworth to Mrs. Aylbert.

Roselands.

HOW agreeably, my dear Madam, do you blend pleasure with instruction. When I wish to converse with faithful counsellors, I have recourse to your letters; and from them I learn the state of my conduct at the time you wrote them.

Your last* lies before me. Give me leave to make a transcript from it, lest you should have forgotten it. You say, "There is nothing, my young friend, a person in your situation is so little acquainted with as the state of her heart, when love and duty alternately prevail. Your regard for Mr. Courtland, I believe to be as pure as you paint it; but,

* It does not appear.

at

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at your time of life, to talk of a rational friendship with such a man, is the mere romance of a youthful imagination. Had I not long been convinced of Mr. Courtland's entire attachment to you, I had warned you of your danger, by telling you, that the sentiments you entertained for him were too lively for friendship, and too tender to bear neglect."

Here your letter dropt from my hand, and, though alone, my cheeks were covered with blushes. Why throbs my heart?

MISS COURTLAND takes up the pen.

"I'll tell you child—'Tis love that makes it throb."

"Dear—dear Sophy."

"And dear, dear Emmeline."—
I then shewed her a letter I had just received from my father; a copy of which I will inclose, that you may see how very deserving this brother of mine is of her tenderest regard.—As I read, we mingled our tears together: they were not tears of sorrow, such as I have formerly shed at my brother's conduct; but they were tears of joy, bursting from a grateful heart,

heart, for the blessed change which a few months had wrought on him.

When I came to that part wherein my father mentions my brother's looking much paler and thinner than usual, Emeline would certainly have fainted, had she not been relieved by a flood of tears; and for a long time she could only exclaim, "If he should die!—If he should die!"

"Pish," said I; "there is not the least fear of that. I could lay my life he is only dispirited for want of his plaything. You have absolutely ruined the poor boy." She was in the pouts, and flung out of the room.

The idea that he was unwell, so preyed upon her mind for several days, that she was incapable of pursuing the least amusement.

Though it was nearly midnight when we parted, she had not left me many minutes before she came again into my room, to beg I would indulge her to sit with me half an hour, as her spirits laboured under such an uncommon depression, that she was certain she could not get a wink of sleep; "for my heart," added she, "is very sad: your brother, perhaps, is ill—the post to-day has brought no letters from Warwickshire."

Here

Here the rolling of a carriage at such an unseasonable hour made us start—In an instant Brett ran in, crying, “Ladies, ladies, my master—my master!”

“Ah, my God!” cried Emmeline, “then your brother must be dangerously ill!” She snatched up the candle; but hurrying down with so much precipitation, it went out: she caught a glimpse of somebody at the foot of the stairs, which she concluded to be my father—“Welcome, welcome, to my heart!” exclaimed she—“Is all well?”

“All, all is well,” cried my delighted brother (for it was he), “if I find the joy of my heart so.”

How confused the poor girl looked on discovering her mistake!—He still held her in his arms, spight of herself, when I entered the parlour: “If I do not go shares with you, Emmeline, in my brother’s affection, I shall grow jealous:—but let me see,” holding a candle to his face, “you look less like a dying man than Emmeline’s fears had painted you; for she has seen winding-sheets in the candle every night since my father wrote that you were not well.”

“I have not been ill at all,” said he; “but my mind has been very sickly. I found no satisfaction in any thing; for I had

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I had left at Roselands what alone could give any zest to my pleasures—my sweet Emmeline. Say, dearest girl, though an unexpected guest, I hope I am not an unwelcome one."

"Indeed, Sir," said she, "you are most welcome; but what brought you hither at a time so unexpected?"

"To see—to hear—to talk with the idol of my soul," rejoined he. "The day before yesterday I had leave of absence given me, to enquire after my dear girls at Roselands: but do you know that he who travels on the wings of love never stops to dine?"

Something was instantly set before him. I hoped he would excuse the attendance of the men-servants, who were gone to bed; but Emmeline, I knew, would be proud to officiate as butler.

She presented him with a glass of wine, which he no sooner raised to his lips, than he set it down again, saying, "Never—never, my best love, can I be grateful enough for such indulgence."

"I am mortified," said I, "'tis never in my power to deserve praise for any thing. Here is Emmeline has all the glory, though she has not uttered six words since your arrival; but all that
she

she does is right. I wish I had a lover, that——”

Jumping up, she laid her spread hands on my lips, begging me, if I had any humanity, not to kill her with confusion.

My delighted brother, pressing her hands to his bosom, said, I must not be too hard on his dear girl, though my raillery was intended for his advantage.

I then urged him to retire, as he had been travelling for such a number of hours.

“ Not,” said he, “ till you are informed of the intention of my visit.— You must know then, I am sent by our General on a recruiting party, to get as many recruits as I can to serve the rest of the campaign at Courtland Manor.”

“ Very well, brother,” said I; “ but I shall not march a step till I have received the bounty-money. What say you, Emmeline?”

“ That I have not courage for such an undertaking: and therefore, if bounty-money be offered me, I shall endeavour to get a substitute with it.”

“ Then I shall desert my colours,” added my impetuous brother; “ for unless I have your presence, to keep up my courage in the field of action, I shall certainly

certainly be suspected of cowardice."—Then the fly rogue asked after Falkner, who, I fancy, was the sole occasion of all his low spirits in Warwickshire.—

Adieu.

SOPHIA COURTLAND.

LETTER XXII.

H. Courtland, *E/q*; to G. Montrose, *E/q*.

Roselands.

"YOU astonish me, Courtland!—What, date already from Roselands!" methinks I hear you cry.

Very true, George; for on quitting it, I seemed to have left my existence behind me. I now breathe the same air with Emmeline, follow the same pursuits, and watch over her till my fond fancy tells me she returns my love.

The day after my arrival, I did see, or at least I fancied I saw (which, to a man in love, is just the same thing), a pen-sive languor on her countenance; I proposed a tour of a day or two previous to our departure for Courtland Manor.

We

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We drove to Weymouth; where the first object we met on the strand was that whimsical devil, Lord Layton. In a very gallant manner, he paid his compliments to the ladies (who were not a little flurried on recollecting the adventure they had at the Pantheon, wherein his lordship played so principal a part); then said, he had not till now deferred asking their forgiveness, but that he could never get out of me the least intimation where they might be found. “ Yet, upon my soul, ladies, your brother is in the right to keep you under lock and key; for your persons would never be in safety were mankind often indulged the transport of gazing on them. But do you really intend, Courtland, they shall live and die in single blessedness?”

“ I have no power over their hearts, my lord—I hold myself only the guardian of their persons.”

The ladies walked on before us.—“ Faith, Courtland,” cried his lordship, “ a d——d fine pair of girls these sisters of your’s, by Heavens!—I would not be allied to such a pair for all the world—if I were, I would get an act of parliament to dissolve the ties of blood, and marry them both.”

“ I thought

“ I thought one wife was more than your lordship could tell what to do with.”

“ D—n her, I shall get rid of her in a few weeks ; and then, hey, what say ye ? I’ll take one of your sisters off your hands. The eldest is the finest figure : but then the youngest—harkee—I’ll have the youngest ; there is such heavenly roguery in her blue eyes—see how sweetly she moves along—no tragic stalk—all pure simplicity—her native graces have not been destroyed by a French dancing-master—and, when she speaks, how the Loves and Cupids sport about her mouth. Upon my soul, that girl will make a man a rogue in spight of himself.”

Chattering in this manner, we arrived at the inn, where I found his lordship was also an inmate.

The ladies, having no great predilection in his favour, instead of coming into the dining-room, went up to their apartment.

“ But where are the ladies ?” cried he, on seeing the tea waiting their coming. “ What, I suppose you have sent them to bed, to avoid the sight of me : but I’ll have them down—upon my soul, I will.”

I said,

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I said, I had that opinion of their prudence, that I always left them to act according to their own discretion.

“ Ho, ho,” returned he, ringing the bell. “ Hey, waiter; step up to the ladies with my compliments, and tell them the tea has been waiting this half hour. Remember, Courtland, my eyes shall have a full feast, of gazing on that little delicious fair-haired witch.”

“ Remember then, my lord, the most extreme delicacy must be observed in your conduct, if you would wish to stand high in her good graces.”

“ Curse me if I will not be modesty itself. Why, her sweetness has already clarified my senses. I’ll talk to her of nothing but angels, and archangels, and all that. O, give my eyes but fair play, and I’ll consent to wear a curb upon my tongue.”

Emmeline, I think, never looked so provokingly handsome: a crimson glow, occasioned by her walk, had heightened her complexion, which served as a kind of torch to light up the rest of her beauties. She took her seat in the window, his lordship taking his next her.

Sophia, as usual, continued to address her by the name of sister; and she might

still have remained as such but for my foolish imprudence.

I was not quite easy to have her beauties so minutely examined by his lordship's penetrating eyes. "My dear Miss Ackworth," said I, "I wish I could prevail on you to quit your seat; the evening is rather cold, and you have not been well."

His lordship caught my words; and I saw it was with the utmost difficulty he constrained himself from bursting into a loud laugh. "What, I suppose, Courtland," cried he, "this young lady must have been a daughter of your mother's by a former marriage; for I think you addressed her by the name of Ackworth?"

"I did, my lord. But—but—"

"You need not puzzle yourself, Courtland, to explain what is no mystery at all. You are only half-sister, I presume then, Madam, to this gentleman?"

"Or rather no sister at all," added she; "yet General Courtland has had the goodness to adopt me as his child, and as such has given me a title to claim a brother and sister here"—bowing.

The subject now dropped till the tea-things were removed; when, rising and

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seizing me by the collar of my coat, he dragged me into the next room, saying, “ This is a d——d fine piece of deceit, Courtland, you have put upon me!—Tell me, do you intend this sweet witch for a mistress or a wife? for I see you are in for’t.”

“ I hardly know what my future intentions are, my lord; but this I know, Miss Ackworth’s mind is the seat of purity; and whoever beholds her with a wish to have her less perfect, is a villain.”

“ Whew, whew,” whistled he; “ what d——d pompous nonsense you sober fellows talk, when once you have been dabbling with Reformation!—Miss Ackworth’s a large fortune, I suppose, or your father would not thus expose his son to so strong a temptation.”

“ Her father’s estate went to the male heirs; and as to Emmeline, I never enquired whether she has a shilling or not.”

“ Very uncommon that, faith; for I suppose your father, like other fathers, would chuse that you should buy a wife by the weight of her gold, not the charms of her person. Then, Courtland, it is not interest which attaches you to her?”

“ I have the honour only to be esteemed her friend, my lord. She is under

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under no engagement to any man living, that I know of; but she has one great fault in her disposition."

" He! he!—Name it; and if I don't cure her—"

" Why then, my lord, her heart is as hard as marble, and her bosom as cold as ice."

" No matter; give her up to my management but for one month; and if I don't melt her into tenderness, I'll never try my skill with woman more."

" Men in love, my lord, have not half your courage; where the hopes are great, the fears are strong."

" Why, Courtland, thou art become the veriest milk and water devil—"

" The company of virtuous women, my lord, have inspired me with virtuous sentiments; and if I want the powers to engage the affections of such a woman as Miss Ackworth, I abhor the thoughts of seduction."

" Poor, poor Courtland!—Love, which tempts other men to be rogues, has made thee honest!"

" If I have not been always honest, my lord, 'tis not now a matter of triumph to me. There are scenes which we have passed together that will not be produc-

tive of much satisfaction to either, when the hour of reflection comes."

" What a sententious devil art thou become, Courtland!—Why, what have we fellows of fortune to do but indulge the pleasures of sense as they rise?"

" Pardon me, my lord, for differing in opinion with you: the more enlarged our power is, the greater will be our condemnation for abusing it. Has not Providence, my lord, think you, appointed men of fortune as instruments to benefit mankind?"

" For the benefit of women, I grant ye. As for what is wrong or right in our sex, I give you leave to pioneer their virtues and vices to the devil, whilst I take a peep at the dove-eyed charmer in the next room."

I never had occasion before to discover so much good sense in my Emmeline. Her conduct was neither too free, nor affectedly reserved; it neither provoked his lordship's satire, nor invited his assiduities.

Did the sex, George, but reflect how easily a steady and uniform conduct will repel the licentious attacks of the most consummate libertines, they would not debase their characters by faint reproaches,

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proaches, which embolden men to a repetition of their fault.

'Tis surprising to see, George, how much the conduct of women forms and regulates those of men; for during the short time we were together, I never saw Layton appear to such advantage. His whole behaviour was truly unexceptionable—lively, gay, whimsical, and agreeable: and he would certainly have attended us to Roselands, had I not solemnly protested we were setting off immediately on a tour for some weeks.

Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXIII.

Miss Ackworth to Mrs. Aylbert.

Roselands.

TELL me, dearest Madam, how I shall control the emotions of my bosom, without betraying its feelings?—Whilst all the world are praising Mr. Courtland, my attentive ear catches the grateful sounds. When I am not writ-

F 3 ing

ing of him, I fancy I have discovered new excellencies in him, with which you ought to be made acquainted ; and then I take up my pen—and then I lay it down—and say, “ I will write of him no more”—and again I take it up, designing to call another subject ; but still his name mixes with my ink, and my hand trembles as I trace it on my paper.

Lord Finleigh and family spent a day with us : when they were gone, Mr. Courtland asked me to give him my company for half an hour in the garden ; he held out his hand—I gave him mine.

“ My heart longs, my dearest Miss Ackworth,” said he, “ to talk to you on the only subject which engrosses it.—I wish not to owe your love to compulsion ; no, your choice shall be free. I know you are too good to deceive me in a point so essential to my peace. Tell me then, if there be yet any sentiments forming in your bosom which may one day confirm my hopes ?”

“ Dear Sir, let me beg—entreat—you must not distress me—Have you forgotten the conditions ?”

“ A passion like mine, my dearest life, will not be controlled by rules : but if I have proposed my question at an unpropitious moment, I will drop it, and only ask

ask you, when I may hope for the honour of attending you to Courtland Manor?"

I told him the more I had considered that visit, the more I felt the impropriety of it. "Let the company of your sister, Sir, satisfy you; and I will devote every moment in thinking of the happy trio—I will fancy myself present in all your pleasures; and, if I *can*, will think myself—happy."

Had the world been given me, I could not have uttered another sentence—Tears rushed into my eyes.

"I see, my sweet girl, the struggles of your soul, and see them with an anguish of mind that words cannot paint. But I have just started a thought which will, I hope, remove all difficulties.—We shall meet at supper; till then, adieu."

I had not power to call after him, so much was I affected by the solemnity of his manner. I flew to Sophy, to acquaint her with my troubles.

"I do believe, Emmeline," said she, "the very best of us women love to plague the men; but, for the matter of that, if these high-spirited fellows were not kept in a little subordination, they would exert their prerogative too soon."

“ Do not rank your brother under that character, Sophy : he is all that’s amiable, and his silence pleads more than the language of other men.”

“ Poor girl,” replied she : “ why, you are so blind even to the man’s faults, that you can’t see that, while he is vowing to grant you every wish of your heart, he is secretly endeavouring to make you adopt all his. Well, Emmeline, I would not be as much in love as you are for all the world.”

“ Who, I !—Am I in love, think you?” bursting into tears, and throwing my arms around her. “ If I have been wrong, O treat my faults with tenderness, or I shall break my heart.”—In this situation, Mr. Courtland surprised us, who tenderly enquired what had happened to occasion my distress ?

“ Nothing,” replied Sophy ; “ but I have been telling Emmeline I would not be as much in love as she is for all the world.”

“ Wou’d I could think so!” said he, with a sigh.

“ Pish,” said she ; “ you men, with all your boasted knowledge and bravery, are mere babies when we girls once take you in hand. But I shall attend the supper, and leave you to adjust the dispute.” Out she ran—I was following her.

“ One

"One word, my dear Miss Ackworth," said Mr. Courtland, detaining my hand. "Our last conversation convinced me of the impropriety of the request I had made you, to honour me with your company at Courtland Manor, without having engaged Mr. Falkner of our party. I have been now to ask him; and am sorry to tell you, he has put a negative on my hopes. I will therefore depart alone, as I wish not to deprive you of my sister's company." Bowing, he left me.

Ah, Madam! what a cruel construction was this to put upon my behaviour!—I wept as if my heart would break. The servant came in to tell me, supper waited for me—I sent my excuses by him. This brought Miss Courtland back.

"Heavens bless us—what, in tears again, Emmeline!" said she. "Our governesses do wrong to make us throw away our dolls so soon, as we immediately take up with others that do us a thousand times more mischief; for tho' man is not a much more rational creature, yet his tricks are infinitely more plaguing."

" Ah, Sophy, your brother despises me!—thinks meanly of me!—Will you

plead for me with him?—Will you tell him, it was not to receive Mr. Falkner's visits that made me wish not to attend him to Warwickshire. It was—it was——”

“ My dearest Miss Ackworth,” cried Mr. Courtland, who had entered unperceived by me, “ wants no advocate to plead her cause with me. Pardon, pardon me, dearest girl, for having been the cause of so much pain to you. I will—I do believe, that Mr. Falkner was not the cause which made you refuse my invitation. I am not by nature suspicious; but pardon my doubts, I have little to hope—much to fear—and ten thousand anxieties constantly warring in my bosom.”——Adieu.

E. ACKWORTH.

LETTER XXIV.

H. Courtland, *Esq.*; to G. Montrose, *Esq.*

Courtland Manor.

THANK Heaven, we are once more an united family.—As I consider Miss Ackworth as my guest, I have not once ventured since our arrival to breathe a sentence to her on a subject which sits so near my heart. My reserve has been of some advantage to me; for her gaiety is returned, and seems the result of a bosom void of anxiety.

She has a lover already (but who ever sees her and is not so?)—Sir Edward Warren—my old school-fellow; a well-bred man, active in his pursuits, warm in his friendships, and ardent in his amours; has a handsome independent fortune, and a very agreeable sister, who has no great aversion to your humble servant.

We were all well pleased to renew again an acquaintance which began in our infancy.

Besides Sir Edward Warren, there is a Mr. Clarkson in the neighbourhood, of good manners, good estate, and, what

the ladies value still more, a good person: he is not so lively as Warren, but has a sounder judgment and a better cultivated understanding. He seems mighty bustling about my sister: but whether all is still in her bosom or not, I am yet to learn.

I must go—O, these lawyers, what dull drawbacks are they on the moments of a man who would wish to devote them all to love!—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXV.

To the Same.

THE inviting softness of the morning yesterday drew us out on horseback. Though I took upon me to escort the ladies, I found myself totally ignorant of the country, and led them into great difficulties before I was aware of the danger; for the roads were in many places so narrow and stoney, that the two girls with difficulty sat their horses. As we had quitted the public road in search

search of prospects, and seeing one, of which we wished to take a nearer survey, we continued our route till I absolutely began to have apprehensions for the safety of my fair companions—I therefore dismounted them, and giving our horses to the servants, ordered them to follow.

The difficulties we had undergone at length were amply repaid, by a most romantic scene opening upon us, when we reached the foot of the lane, which brought us to the mouth of a valley between two ridges of rocks, from the summit of which fell a beautiful cascade, which meandered through the valley.—The trees on all sides spreading their foliage, invited us to rest; whilst the murmuring of the waters, added to the song of the nightingale and goldfinch, formed a most pleasing concert—to which we lent an attentive ear. We had not advanced more than five hundred yards in the valley, before we espied the most strikingly picturesque little farm that can be imagined. Miss Ackworth at once pronounced it to be some fairy mansion. Seeing a good looking elderly woman come out of it, she exclaimed, “And see! there stands the genius which inhabits it.”

“Suppose,” said I, “I solicit her benevolence for some little refreshment for my

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my fair travellers, who must be nearly exhausted with heat and fatigue."

The sun then shone intensely hot: the ladies looked their thanks. I found the ceremony of introducing them to the good fairy no very difficult task; and though all around her appeared neatness itself, she would not suffer us to sit down on her cleanly chairs till she had well rubbed them with her still more cleanly apron.

"Well," said my Emmeline, "I would never wish to be richer than to possess such a farm as this for six months in the year."

"Perhaps," said I, "the purchase of it would be no very difficult matter.—Pray, my good woman, is this your own estate?"

"Alack-a-daisey, no, Sir. I should think myself as rich as Crispin if it were. It belongs to young Squire Courtland. Mayhap you may have heard of him."

"Why, yes," said my sister, "I have heard of him. But pray can you tell me what sort of a man he is?"

"For the matter of that, my lady, I don't know much of him. He has lived in foreign parts a number of years, and is but just returned to the Manor. I remember he was the prettiest boy—"

Here

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Here I thought a violent burst of laughter would have overset the prudence of the two girls.

"I warrant you then," cried my sister, "he is now a pretty fellow."

"'Tis most likely, my lady. Indeed all the folks say so that have seen him. But he has never once thought of his 'states, but to spend the rents, and leaving every thing to steward Anderson, who racked the tenants mainly, to put the money in his own pocket; till at last he were found out, and then he made away with himself. But no matter for that—the country is not quit of him yet; for his ghost walks every night round the barley-mow, where he proved false-hearted to poor Betty Barns."

Here another inclination to laugh had nearly betrayed all. But I gravely continued my interrogatives about the young squire.

"Why, your honour," continued she, "'tis said he has had a poweration of learning, and he was reckoned main sprak; for at twelve years old he could read the hard words in the bible like a parson."

This was too much for our muscles to endure without violent contortions.

"Learn-

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“ Learning is a fine thing,” said my Emmeline; “ for

“ When Land is gone and Money’s spent,
“ Then Learning is most excellent.”

“ It may be so, an’ please your ladyship; for I hear the young squire has turned out very wild, and has spent his money in keeping concubines, dressed out in your silks and sattins; which you know is enough to bring a king’s son to ruin, though his father can make money. But I am certain for all that, none but your honest folk can go to Heaven; your quality-gentry don’t crowd to get in there as I once see’d them at a stage-play.”

“ I should like to see the squire mightily,” said my sister; “ but as he keeps concubines, I suppose your good sort of folks have nothing to say to him.”

“ Why, to be sure, my lady,” returned she, “ one should think so; but ‘tis all one to our gentry-folks: if so be a man is not poor, they don’t care a rush for his character. Why, Lord help me, Sir Edward Warren’s huntsman told my husband, that half the lords in the land, by playing at cards, were ready to come on the parish. Heavens bless us! the poor-

poor-rates then will be higher than ever."

"They will be terrible times, indeed," replied my sister, gravely shaking her head. "But pray, my good woman, were you ever at the Manor?—What sort of a house is it?"

"I can venture to say, your ladyship never see'd a more grander place in your life. Why some of the furnitudo is all silk and some all velvet, with solfas in the parlours as soft as beds, and capricon chairs, and vension window-blinds; and, O lard!" (looking up) "glasses that would cover one side of the room, and taller than our clock!"

"Wonderful, charming," exclaimed Emmeline; "but proceed."

"Then there are tables in the great hall all of your white marble stone, such as they make monuments of; and there are some very handsome ones in the chapel adjoining to the house; but none of the family were ever much for going to church, except poor Master Harry, the young squire's father, who, not being kindly treated at home, enlisted for a soldier, and turned out a brave gentleman indeed; for he has given the French many a banging—the Lord Almighty be praised for it," clasping her hands.

"Amen!"

“ Amen !” said my sister.

“ Then, my lady,” continued this recorder of my family history, “ from the chapel there is a door which leads into the scrubbery, and so on to a turpentine walk that merry-andrews all round the park. But the young squire, I find, is going to turn every thing topsy-turvy, and to rebuild the house ; for folks say, he’s going to be married.”

I fixed on Emmeline a look which crimsoned her sweet face with blushes.

Here the husband made his appearance ; but so big with some intelligence he had to impart to his wife, he never saw us.

“ God bless the young squire !” exclaimed he, “ he’ll be a brave man at last. We are all to continue in our farms at the old rents ; and every poor tenant who has been racked by steward Anderson, is to have a year’s rent returned him, to put him again upon his legs. This is what his honour’s father says is but justice.”

“ God bless ‘em both !” returned she. “ We may live to see Christians again at the Manor. But, farmer, don’t you see the gentlefolks ?”

Turning about, he immediately recognised me ; for he had been with me,

to have a new lease granted for this very farm, called the Paradise Farm; yet so great a stranger was I to my own property, that I had really planned in my mind to make a purchase of it, to present to Emmeline.

Montrose, if you have ever seen any thing pass instantaneously from life to a state of petrefaction, you can best form an idea of the good woman on discovering who I was. She dropped into a chair, exclaiming, with uplifted hands, "Ah! John, John, I shall soundy!"

"Courage, my good friend," said I, taking her hand; "you have said nothing which ought not to make *me* blush, rather than *yourself*. Shame should be only felt by those who do ill actions. I am now, thank God, I hope, quite a reformed man; and I trust, by the example of all my good friends, I shall grow better and better every day."

"Lord bless me, Sir, what a fine Christian thought is that!—'Tis a thousand pities but your honour had been made a parson."

The farmer hoped I would bring a wife, and settle amongst them.

Glancing a look towards my precious love, I said, it was not my fault I had not been married long ago; "for I must

must tell you as a secret, farmer, I am desperately in love with a dear girl that can't endure me; and I have sworn never to marry any other woman on earth."

My Emmeline blushed.

" La, for certain sure," rejoined the farmer, " your honour jokes; there can be no lady in the land, I think, who could refuse so comely a young gentleman."

" Aye," interrupted the wife; " and, besides, one who could keep her in your silks and sattins every day, and a coach to ride out in."

" Finery," returned I, " might tempt any other woman; but this young lady has no pride: besides, she has found out that she is never so truly lovely as when she is least adorned.—Is it not true?" pressing my angel's hand.

She said, I greatly over-rated the lady's merit; yet she believed, were her reasons known for refusing me, her conduct would merit praise rather than censure. However, she thought me much too good for the lady.

" That's very handsome of you, Madam, to say so," said the farmer. " An' if she be but half as handsome as your ladyship—"

" Never

"Never did two creatures more resemble each other, farmer," said I.

"Why then," returned he, "I wish you would turn off the scornful lady, and make sure of this here—she looks so heavenly tempered. Do, Madam, consider on't."

"What says my——" again pressing Emmeline's hand.

"Why, that I should never be happy," replied she, "were I to run away with another young woman's sweetheart."

Here my sister reminded us that we should be scarcely in time to dress for dinner; and after partaking of some excellent fruits and brown bread, we took leave, promising to renew our visit the first opportunity.

How thoroughly do I despise myself, George, when I cast a retrospect on my past life. For almost five-and-twenty years, nothing can be recorded of me, but that I have lived for no other earthly purpose than to the gratification of my appetites; not standing forth, as my situation enabled me, the friend and protector of the poor and the indigent; for, thro' my inconsiderate folly, Oppression, in the person of my late steward, has laid her iron rod on Misery's helpless offspring; when soft-eyed Pity, by pouring the cordial drop

drop of mercy on their sorrows, should at once have silenced their clamours, and bid all remembrance of them be lost in the satisfaction of the present moment.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXVI.

To the Same.

Courtland Manor.

STILL disappointed, dear Montrose, in all my schemes!—I thought by coming hither to have divided my time between settling my affairs and the society of my family. But the world breaks in upon me from all parts.

The reputation of my wines, and the beauty of the two ladies, draw the men, they tell me; and others add, that there are some certain attractions in your friend which bring about the women. To me the world contains but one; and for whom Sir Edward Warren is breathing the most impassioned sighs; whilst Clarkson courts my sister with his eyes: there is no man whose character I more esteem, and

and to whom I would more readily resign her, provided my consent would have any influence; and the sprightly Kitty Warren would sometimes spirit me up to a romping bout, had I the least *penchant* for gallantry with any other woman but my angel.

Yesterday I had a most horrid day of fatigue. I was obliged to entertain all the people of fashion within twenty miles of us.

The evening proved every way favourable for diversions abroad. We had a concert in the wood; and supper was laid in the quadrangle. The surrounding trees were illuminated with various coloured lamps; to which the moon also added her silver rays. The whole had a pleasing effect; at least it was the opinion of the company.

We danced—but dancing, so far from exhilarating my spirits, absolutely dejected them; for with my tongue I had unmeaning gallantries to play off to Kitty Warren, whilst my eyes were fully employed to watch her brother's behaviour towards my Emmeline.

Myself excepted, I never saw a party more mirthfully disposed. But after the gentlemen had drank a little too freely, and the sun began to rise, I was possessed with

with ten thousand anxieties, lest any indecorum should have happened. When I met Emmeline in the dance, I urged her to retire: I would have persuaded her she looked ill; but she assured me she was never better, and felt not the least fatigue.—Did you ever see her dance, George? Her movements are above the rules of art: to simple nature alone she is indebted for all her graces.

It was five o'clock before we broke up; and Emmeline, with her delicate constitution, all this time exposed to the night-air.—I was almost frantic at last; partly with the thoughts of that, and partly from having overheard Sir George Warren a hundred times, in the most pointed language, utter the most ardent love—such as, with all my vast excess of fondness, I have never ventured to disclose.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXVII.

To the Same.

MARK the effects of good humour and hospitality, George, to our inferiors; for it has gained me not only the hearts, but the hands, of all.

The representative of —— dying, a writ came down for the election of a new member. Without giving me the least intimation of their design, the voters, all to a man, headed by their Mayor, came in grand cavalcade to Courtland Manor, having their hats and horses ornamented with blue ribbons; and drawing themselves up in a line before the hall-door, saluted me with three cheers—“*Courtland for ever!*”

I went out to them, and begged to know what had occasioned me the honour of this visit?—In one voice they exclaimed, they were determined to see me a parliament man.

I made my acknowledgments with all possible politeness; but begged leave to decline the honour. As I was so young a man, I thought myself unqualified for so important a trust.

"Qualified—qualified!" cried one.
"Why, your honour has twenty qualifications in the county: there's the estate at Warmesley, and the estate at —, and so on."

I begged leave to undeceive him. I knew I had fortune enough to procure me a seat in parliament; but I much doubted whether I was sufficiently acquainted with the laws and constitution of my country to become a legislator.

"Why, Lord bless your honour," returned the honest soul, "all that the country desires of a parliament man is only this—to vote against the French, take no bribe, and to stand up boldly for the church and Old England for ever."

This truly anti-patriotic speech was honoured with three cheers; after which I assured them, I thought that man unworthy a seat in the British Senate who would not solemnly swear to maintain such principles to the last drop of his blood; and then waving my hat in the air, I said, my honest friend's sentiments deserved a loud huzza.

After promising to attend them the next day at the town-hall, I told them, I hoped I should have the honour of their company at dinner. Then ordering

ing my October to be most liberally distributed (which, by the bye, has got many a booby into parliament), they afterwards returned to their respective homes in the most perfect good humour.

Suffice it to say, the whole of the business was concluded within a week; and I was danced about, a spectacle for women and children, in a chair, adorned with laurel sprinkled with silver. In my hat I wore a very brilliant cockade, created by the lovely fingers of my Emmeline; and as I waved it to the populace, *en passant*, I caught a glance of her sweet face from a window: but what struck real anguish to my heart was, Sir George Warren hanging over her with eyes of love.

Ah, Montrose! how ill honours accord with a tortured heart!—Who would have suspected that the object of envy to an admiring populace, perhaps, was the only person present who stood most in need of compassion?—I am very miserable.—Emmeline meets Sir George Warren's advances with a satisfaction which maddens me to think of.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXVIII.

Lord Layton to Robert Langford, Esq.

Courtland Manor.

THOU wilt be surprised to hear, Bob, I have taken this castle by storm; the governor of which looks upon me as a moving combustible, which he fears every moment will blow up his *breast-works*;—and heartily wishes me at the devil.

“ But how, Layton, did you scale the walls to get thither ? ” methinks I hear you cry.

You shall hear of all my manœuvres, Sir, in proper form and order.

Courtland is a noble fellow, even in his reformed state; but where his heart is concerned, his temper betrays a jealousy which makes admirable sport to a fellow of my enterprising disposition.

I was at Sir William Bruton’s, who lives about twenty miles from the Manor, when its lord came one morning on a visit to him. I verily believe he would as soon have met the devil; for I looked archly upon him, as if I intended to do him a future mischief. He had scarcely

courage

courage to return my civility: I rioted on his confusion. This love, Langford, has made one of the best bred men in the world a mere churl; for he was going away without giving me an invitation to see him.

"Hark'ee, Courtland," cried I, as he was stepping into his chaise, "do you know that you have made a horrid mistake to-day?"

"What do you mean, my lord?" with surprise.

"Why, I mean you have not asked me to come and see you; and I am dying for another peep of that dear little blue-eyed she devil. Come, come, I'll overlook the neglect, because I see that love, by quickening your feelings, has blunted your memory. I came hither on horseback; and as you have four fine prancers to your carriage, you shall give me a lift. I will only step in, make my excuses to Sir William, and order my servants to follow."

He coloured—stammered—hesitated; said, it was impossible he could receive the honour of my visit; for he was to go to London in a few days.

"Why that, you blockhead, need not make the least difference. You don't

G 3 carry

carry the young ladies with you, I hope."

This was worse and worse, you will say. Never was poor toad so hampered.

"The ladies will return into Dorsetshire, my lord, when I go to town."

"For that very reason then, Courtland, I am determined not to lose the glorious golden opportunity of talking soft nonsense to that blushing angel Miss Ackworth. In a few weeks, you know, I shall be totally freed from the marriage yoke; and there is nothing like being prepared to meet all contingencies."

"Is it possible your lordship can ever think of entering into second engagements, after having so badly succeeded in your first?"

"Why not?—The first wife I took in complaisance to my fortune: if I embrace a second, it shall be in complaisance to my feelings. But whether I marry or not, it ever was, and ever will be, the supreme pleasure of my life to make love to every girl who falls in my way. You sober fellows do right enough to marry, who can be content to pass your lives in a dull calm; whilst we libertines are constantly sporting in a tempest of delight, keeping the nuptial torch in a perpetual blaze,

blaze, whose feeble glimmering would otherwise soon grow extinct."

"Upon my word, my lord," returned he, "you mistake me utterly. 'Tis not that I harbour any suspicions that—'tis—in short—'tis because my house at present is not fit to receive you—it has been so long uninhabited—I have no servants—no apartment. But—but I will ask my housekeeper how matters stand, and so send you word."

Here I could compose my muscles no longer. I laughed outright; saying, "Prithee, Courtland, no ceremony. I look upon myself to all intents and purposes as a bachelor; and therefore you may cram me into a light closet, or hoist me into the attic story amongst the maids."

You know, Bob, Courtland is by nature a fellow of the finest temper in the world; and at length fairly joined the laugh with me, saying, "Why then the truth of the matter is, I don't in the least relish the idea of your lordship's visit; for I am the most miserable dog breathing that any other eyes but my own should contemplate the heavenly beauties which surround my dear Miss Ackworth; for as I love her without hope, I

fear every mortal who beholds her is endeavouring to supplant me. She tenderly loves me as her brother; but my fond heart prompts me to aspire to the character of her husband."

" Why then, Courtland, you act a very impolitic part. Flirt with every handsome woman who comes in your way; for depend upon it, you will never touch a woman's passions so effectually, as by mortifying her pride. I do aver, the best of them are the veriest tyrants in nature; they would have all mankind in bondage to them, merely for the purpose of exerting their power."

He smiled, and said, he believed I was right; but when love fled into his bosom, his courage fled out; and in every transaction in which his affections were interested, he was become the greatest coward that ever existed.

" That being the case," rejoined I, stepping into his carriage, " I will attend you home, lest you should be beset with robbers; and I hope I shall deliver you up safe to your mistress."

With a tolerable degree of gaiety, he stepped in after me. We drove off, and arrived safe at my present residence, where I was hospitably received, without waiting

waiting to ask the *housekeeper's* permission.

No getting a line from Sir Charles Willoughby; he is absorbed in his new amour with Lady Carlton.—Adieu; much thine,

LAYTON.

LETTER XXIX.

To the Same.

Courtland Manor.

TIME passes here too agreeably for me to waste hours in giving you the detail; therefore, Robert, you must content yourself with a few occasional sketches.

I don't think the rational life is so very much amiss as my prejudices had figured to me. 'Tis possible, I find, to be perfectly agreeable and *enjoué*, without the least shadow of licentiousness. Faith, if I don't already sigh to become a downright family man; for hang me if I have not found out a charm in the society of virtuous accomplished women, to which I have been all my life a stranger. There is a dignity—a serenity—a composure—

G 5

which

which surrounds this virtue, that I have never felt either at the gaming-table, at the tavern, or in the society of women whose profession it is to prostitute their beauty for the amusement of our licentious hours.

Though frequently in the company of this divine Emmeline, the devil has often bobbed at my elbow; but I gave him a shove before he had time to get into my heart.

General Courtland, I conclude, is not above five-and-forty, or fifty, and is, I think, the completest gentleman I ever saw; besides, his principles, though severely good, throw no tinge of severity over his manners, which is generally the case with your outrageously good souls. Having seen much of life, in almost every nation under the sun, his conversation, replete with anecdote, is always instructive—never dull; his manners are perfectly polite, yet void of all courtly affectation; he is frequently serious, but never gloomy; and has convinced me of a fact I thought was impossible, that a man may be a wit without being an infidel.

As to Harry, he copies his father so exactly, that we must give him up as a lost man; for nothing less than the archfiend

fiend himself, *in propria persona*, will be ever able to drag him amongst us again: for the rogue is actually enamoured of this Virtue, merely from the pleasures she bestows.

The two young ladies seem formed by nature to set each other off to advantage. They dress with great simplicity; yet in a perfectly good taste. I hate to see a really pretty woman striving to awaken our attention by the tawdriness of her drapery. An artist would pronounce Miss Courtland the finest woman; but I think a man of feeling would give it in favour of Miss Ackworth: and never, Bob, was mortal man so enamoured of flesh and blood as Courtland is of her: but what can occasion her coldness to so fine a fellow, is beyond my politics to divine.

Nothing, Bob, so humbles a man in his own opinion as being in love; for, through the fear of not acting agreeably in the eyes of the object of his wishes, he is perpetually dissatisfied with himself.

Yesterday I threw the poor devil into such a perturbation, that I verily believed he would have pistoled me, could he have done it without violating the laws of hospitality.

A large party of us breakfasted in a pavillion at Sir Edward Warren's, who, by the bye, has drank in large draughts of love from the intoxicating eyes of Courtland's Emmeline. Mr. Clarkson is a constant attendant on Miss Courtland; and Kitty Warren, a most delicious girl, provokes us all to romp with her in turn; in her lively way, she started something which brought on a romping-bout.—

I catched the lovely Emmeline in my arms, and ran with her down an avenue which terminated in a slope at the bottom: not being aware of my ground, my foot slipped, and down we rolled together;—however, I instantly raised the lady, who was only angry, not hurt, by the disaster; when Courtland came up to me.

“ ‘Sdeath, my lord, I’m not at all satisfied!—”

“ Nor I neither,” said I, “ upon my soul, if you come to that; for I am of too sanguine a temper to bear opposition.”

“ How, how, how?” fiercely.

“ I’ll tell you how—Have a little patience. Just as I was prepared to execute the threatened vengeance on the cheek of a cherub, you, like a malicious

rious fiend, must needs step in and spoil my sport, though it was a pleasure I had been labouring to procure ever since I have been your guest."

"By heavens! my lord," (with fierceness) "if—if—if—"

"D—n your ifs. Is not a girl the finest mark in the world for a libertine to shoot at?—Men of intrigue, you know, Courtland, doat on opposition, because it animates pursuit: but that Emmeline of yours, with all her saucy airs, is such a mere piece of vegetation, nature has formed her entirely for a wife; and the sooner you make her one the better."

Here the poor fellow looked quite delighted, flattered, and pleased.—A little before we separated to dress for dinner, I overheard a curious dialogue between him and his mistress. It was nearly as follows:

"My dear Miss Ackworth, I have a favour to beg of you; which, however, I want courage to propose."

"Dear Sir," returned she, in the sweetest voice imaginable, "I beg you will name it; and be assured, if it be in my power——"

"Thus encouraged then"—(Here, I am sure, he took her hand and kissed it, though I did not see it; but the thing
speaks

speaks for itself.)—“ You must know then, though it be my pride to have you admired by all the world, yet when I think others survey you with my feelings, I wish you sometimes to appear less enchantingly amiable: and though it be hardly possible your person should receive any advantage from dress, yet that which you wore yesterday was so much admired by Lord Layton and Sir George Warren for its elegant simplicity, that it absolutely put fashion out of countenance. In my eyes, you will appear equally charming in any dress; therefore, if you would lay aside to-day what procured you so much observation, you don’t know how much it would oblige me.”

She laughed.—“ Pardon me, dear Sir,” said she; “ but by the seriousness of your countenance I thought you had something of importance to propose.”

“ It is of the utmost importance,” replied he, “ to me; but it is unjust that I should wish to rob you of admirers: therefore pardon my impatience; and look upon my request as never having been made.”

I heard no more. But when she appeared at dinner I saw she had strictly complied with his injunctions. Yet Warren,

ren, to whom I related what had passed, swore it became her infinitely more.

“ Why will not all women, Miss Ackworth, learn to dress of you,” said he to her. “ Do you think, Courtland,” continued the malicious devil, “ Miss Ackworth ever appeared in any dress which set off her complexion to so much advantage?—What say you, Layton?”

I gave it in the affirmative.

“ I think,” replied Courtland, “ the gravity of the colour”—(it was a plain brown, with ornaments of the palest pink)—“ robs her countenance of much of its wonted gaiety.”

“ But is not that charming languor,” added I, “ a thousand times more interesting to a person of feeling than the most sprightly vivacity?”

“ We think differently of beauty, my lord,” said he;—“ what say you, Sir George?”

“ I fancy we are all nearly of the same opinion respecting the present object.”

We worked him up to almost a frenzy, which was ripened into perfection before the night was over.

After tea, we had a little music, more dancing, and so on till supper; after which, Kitty Warren proposed some Christmas plays, which generally produce

duce a little romping. The other ladies attempted to overrule the proposal; but she, having the gentlemen on her side, carried the motion with a great majority of voices.

Poor Courtland was so totally absorbed, attending to the conduct of Sir Edward towards his deary, that the blunders he made provoked every one's laughter; nay, Miss Ackworth could not refuse joining her voice to the chorus.

Kitty Warren was full of mischievous pleasantry in the disposal of the forfeits. Holding up one which she knew to be her brother's, she proposed to him that he should lead Miss Ackworth to the bottom of the shrubbery, and there, on his knees, disclose to her the name of the lady he loved best.

I would give a thousand guineas, Bob, could I give you a sketch of Courtland's countenance. Every muscle was agitated by a strong convulsion: he looked like—. No, upon my soul, I can't tell what he looked like!—But when Warren took her by the hand to lead her out, Harry was absolutely speechless.

Whether the father suspected what passed in the son's mind, I know not; however, the General said, " You see, Sir

Sir George, by the alarmed countenance of my little girl, she would wish to be excused the walk at this time of night."

"No, by heavens!" cried the son, at last recovering the use of speech, which terror had taken away; "Miss Ackworth shall not go, unleis it be entirely with her own consent."

"Then, depend upon it," cried she, "it is not."

"Come then," said the General, "we will not do away the sentence; we will only mitigate it. Suppose, Sir George, you were to disclose the secret to the lady in the further part of the room; and we will give you our words not to listen."

This proposal was agreed to; but Courtland said nothing.

Here Sir George took her aside, and on his knees disclosed the mighty secret; but when he returned the blushing maid to her seat, her glowing cheeks plainly discovered, that herself alone had been the object of his adoration.

We all urged her to disclose the secret; but she said it had made so slight an impression on her memory that it was already effaced.

Here Courtland's spirits again revived, and he looked as if he could have devoured the charming girl with love.

I was

I was never so puzzled as to discover the cause that can induce her to reject the addresses of one of the finest fellows in the world.

Adieu, my dear Bob. I shall depart to-morrow: if you can, meet me at Layton Place.

LAYTON.

LETTER XXX.

Miss Ackworth to Mrs. Aylbert.

Courtland Manor.

MY request is granted, dear Madam, and I shall be with you in a few days: the General and Sophy will leave me with you on their return to Dorsetshire. Mr. Courtland is gone to London. I have much to say regarding what happened previous to his departure; yet know not where to begin.

How polite—how respectful—how attentive has been his behaviour since my coming hither. His silence on a certain subject served to increase my confidence in him; nor ever once did he abuse it.

But

But his affiduities were shewn by a thousand little *gallantries*, which awaken the feelings sooner than the most eloquent language. He was minute to please me in the veriest trifles: knowing my passion for flowers, every morning he collected me a charming bouquet from the green-house, which I always found laid on the table when I came to breakfast. O, Madam, had you seen the satisfaction his features expressed when I placed it in my bosom!—At other times I would place the flowers in my hair, in lieu of foreign ornaments; and then he could scarcely confine his satisfaction within the limits of prudence.

Mr. Courtland was to have set off for town early in the morning, and had taken leave of us over-night. My spirits were extremely dejected—I had not slept a moment: but guess how they were hurried on going into the breakfast-room, to find Mr. Courtland there; yet so oppressed, he could hardly speak.

I expressed my astonishment at seeing him; endeavouring as much as I could to conceal a tremor which hung on my voice.

“ And can you be surprised, my dear Miss Ackworth, at finding me still here? How ardently have I watched to procure

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one half-hour's conversation before I departed!—But you have industriously disappointed all my attempts. Tell me then, my dearest Miss Ackworth, if I do not find you at Roselands on my return from town, will you not permit me to attend you at Fernley Meads?"

I begged him not again to urge a request which I thought inconsistent both with propriety and decorum.

"Good God!" added he, "can you not grant me so simple a request, without offering violence to either?—You have decreed me, Madam, my portion of misery; and it now becomes me to support it like a man.—I will then only further add, that wherever you are, I will pray Heaven to pour its choicest blessings on you." Then caught up his hat, and hurried out of the room.

I burst into a flood of tears—threw myself on the sofa—and, leaning my head on my hand, sighed as if my heart would break.—"What will become of me now!" exclaimed I to myself. "That best of men has left me in displeasure; and all my days to come will be completely wretched!"

"Delightful sounds!" cried Mr. Courtland, who returned unperceived by me—
"Let me date the present moment as the most

most exquisitely happy of my life"—(wiping away my tears)—“Let me seize the present instant, my dearest Emeline, whilst your tender bosom is softened by affliction, to wrest from you the fatal secret which makes the misery of my life.”

I urged him not to tempt me to violate my duty.

“Do not think, my dearest Emeline, I would this moment accept your offered hand, were I not well assured the precious gift came accompanied by your heart; for, in proportion as I am delicate in my love, so am I jealous as to its object. The world looks upon me as a happy man—Alas! how fallacious are appearances!—Many, many months has this bosom borne an aching heart within it. You have cruelly forbidden me to make application to my father for your favour: only say, best beloved of my soul, what are your reasons for so doing?”

“O spare me, I conjure you!” cried I; “spare me but this once!—My spirits are violently agitated; they want the foothings of maternal affection. When I am with my dear Mrs. Aylbert, I will lay open every secret thought before her; and if you still wish to learn the state of my heart, from her pen you shall have it;

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it; or, as I suspect, she will convey me to Roselands."

"Heavens!" cried he, kissing my hand, "let this be the seal of your promise; but take care, dearest girl, not to disappoint my fond hopes: I will allow every thing to your delicacy—but remember *your* indifference will be death to me."

Neither spoke for some time. With anxious tenderness he hung over me as my tears flowed.

In this situation the General surprised us. "Hey-day, Courtland," said he, "why, I expected you were half way to London by this time!—What, are your last words and dying-speech so very pathetic as to make my Emmeline's tears flow?—Come, my dear, make me your confidant"—drawing a chair next me.

I was all confusion. I felt my cheeks glow; for Mr. Courtland still continued to press my hands to his lips.

"I am always pleased, Harry, to see your kindness to my Emmeline. Come, be candid, and tell me which is the criminal, that I may take the aggrieved part?"

"Emmeline then, Sir, is the criminal."

"How,

“ How, Emmeline!—But does she plead guilty?”

“ She has a stubborn heart, Sir, and will not own she is in the wrong,” said he.

“ Indeed, indeed,” sobbed I, throwing my arms round the General’s neck, “ I am not guilty: I am only unfortunate. You must enquire no farther; but pity your child, and warn her to live so as to deserve a continuance of your favour, and carefully to avoid doing that which might bring upon her everlastingly your displeasure.”

“ You are very ambiguous, my love,” kissing my cheek; “ but I think I can form some guess of what passes in the minds of both you and my son, and have the strongest suspicion of the criminality of both. However, Courtland, will you consent, that on the first day we meet again at Roselands the cause which is now before us shall have a final hearing? I have a strong idea, that the verdict will not be given in Emmeline’s favour.”

Mr. Courtland expressed his warmest approbation of the proposal. While I attempted to oppose it, my feeble voice was overruled by the united ones of father and son.

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The General then (never shall I forget the tender benevolence of his looks) clasped us both to his bosom, saying, “ Long may you live, my children, an example to the world, and a blessing to each other!—and God grant, for every mercy received, your hearts may be impressed with a just sense of his goodness!”—He could say no more; but hurried out of the room. The tender remembrance of what followed, still fills my eyes with tears.—I can write no more.

E. ACKWORTH.

LETTER XXXI.

H. Courtland, Esq.; to Miss Ackworth.

London.

IF I have but one idea left, my dear Miss Ackworth must pardon my deficiency—her charming self having robbed me of every other. Yes, in the last dear moment when we parted, as I pressed you not reluctant to my bosom (the precious gift of my indulgent

dulgent father), the world and all its pleasures were then blotted from my memory, and Emmeline, my charming Emmeline, possessed my soul entirely. With what tender transport did I gaze on the tear of sensibility which rolled down your cheek!—Yes, dearest girl, I gazed on it as the silent interpreter of all my future happiness.—If there be any who have loved like me, they best can judge of what I felt!

And when I urged you to confirm my hopes, by granting me a promise you would be mine, though the unfinished sentences expired in broken accents on your lips, yet your silence was more expressive than words. I saw that the powers of utterance were suppressed by the feelings of your mind. I could not offer you relief, when I myself stood in need of support.—Think of the struggles I endured when I tore myself from you, in a moment so propitious to my love!—I threw myself into my chaise: as it drove off, I caught a glance of you from the window—My sensies were inebriated at such a tender proof of regard; and when I got to London, my bosom still cherished the fond recollection.

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Think,

Think, best beloved of my heart, of the promised day of trial which awaits us at Roselands. O let it be propitious to the most faithful of men!—Let no vulgar prejudice taint the mind of my Emmeline, to procrastinate that happiness for which I so long have sighed; but exercise the power you have over me with moderation, and remember “mercy becomes a monarch better than his crown.”

My first intention on taking up my pen, was, to implore my beloved friend to shorten the days of my probation. Permit me to visit Fernley Meads on my road to Roselands, and to have the satisfaction of conducting you thither?

See how your last indulgence has emboldened my presumption: by assuming confidence, I feel as though I should be successful; and therefore I will venture to hint at a few anxieties to which my mind is still a prey, wishing that you will pay every possible attention to your health.

For my sake, then, do not walk too early in the mornings, before the sun has dispelled the noxious vapours of the night; nor at noon-day, when it is intensely hot; nor too late in the evening, for the damps may be equally pernicious.

I wish

I wish also you would not venture on any horse but your own Flora: I have written to Roselands, to have it sent after you; for, by riding one less gentle than your own, you might get a fall; by which I should be made wretched for ever!

Pardon my doubting mind; another fear obtrudes itself: your frame is too delicate to bear much; dancing in large parties, you breathe a fetid air—and your lungs are tender; besides, late hours I would have you avoid by all means.— Now, though I have expressed my fears on a few particulars, yet I would have your mind perpetually amused; only take care, my best life, that your spirits be not exhausted.

Forgive my presumption, which has dared to dictate to you; and believe me most faithfully and affectionately
your's,

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXXII.

Miss Ackworth to Miss Courtland.

Fernley Meads.

I HAVE not leisure to describe to my dear Sophy the tender friendship I have experienced from Mrs. Aylbert since you left us. She encourages me to talk perpetually on a subject nearest my heart; for every post brings me fresh instances of your dear brother's affection.

Why will he persist in painting a passion with such an energy of language as I never can deserve?—I feel no pleasure in society—I stroll from morning to night in the most retired walks of the garden—I take your much loved brother's letters from my bosom—I shed tears of grateful sensibility over them—The rustling of the leaves makes me apprehend he is coming (though in the strongest terms I have forbidden him)—In haste I return them to their sacred repository—My heart beats—I hurry into another walk, as if to avoid him, till my spirits are more composed—Yet still I hurry on, till, panting for breath, I stop to ask myself—what it is I apprehend?—At other times I think

the

the world have been spectators of my conduct—I then blush at my weakness, laying my spread hand over my face, to conceal my blushes.

Strange things have happened since we parted; but my mind is not composed enough to inform you. Tell the dear General, the first great wish of my life is, that I may never live to disgrace his kindness to me; for when I lose his good opinion, that of the world will follow of course.

Adieu, my dear. A violent pain in my head will not let me add more than that I am your's most affectionately,

E. ACKWORTH.

P. S. Procure for me, if possible, leave of absence for one month; in which time, I hope, my spirits will get sufficiently fortified to stand the expected day of trial.

LETTER XXXIII.

Miss Courtland to Miss Ackworth.

Roselands.

AS we constantly see, dear Emmeline, the greatest contrarieties unite to form a complete whole; in like manner we often see pride, petulance, caprice, love, tenderness, and pity, blended in the same character. Such, at present, is my Emmeline's.

I would not for the world have my bosom in so perturbed a state. Now hoping—then fearing;—this moment all love—and the next all doubt!

You must know, I should vow hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, against you, for the cruel disappointment you have given my brother, by forbidding his visit at Mrs. Aylbert's; but I think you are heartily revenging upon him his former infidelities to the sex.

Your letter came immediately after his arrival last night. He felt a little chagrined to find it not addressed to himself. "Quick, quick, dear girl!" cried he, putting it into my hands.

"A let-

"A letter from Emmeline!—is it?" said I, carelessly.

"Yes, 'tis her dear hand," cried he; "perhaps she repents her cruelty, and has granted me permission to attend her. Read, read, dear sister.—No, don't read it neither.—Let me hope a little longer: I shall have time enough to be miserable hereafter."

"It is very absurd conduct in you, brother, thus to attach yourself to a silly girl."

"Heavens! What, don't you love my angel?" Then looking with inexpressible tenderness.

"Why, she is a good girl to be sure—But—"

"Ah, sister, your affections are cold to mine. Nature never designed two girls should feel for each other those tender sensations which she intended should be reserved for the other sex."

I sat down. He threw himself on the sofa by me; his head leaning on his hand; one leg carelessly thrown over the other; his foot beating time on the carpet. At length he looked up: I contracted my brow as I read.

"Enough, enough!" cried he. "You may spare yourself the trouble of explaining to me the subject of that letter.—

Your looks, Sophy; your looks speak my sentence is already pronounced."

"Why, truly," said I, "your visit to Fernley Meads is again most strictly prohibited; and yet for all that, I believe, if Emmeline don't see you soon, she'll die of a broken heart. Have you no curiosity to read what she has written?"

He held out his hand for your letter; but a mist so dimmed his sight, he could not see a word.

"Come," said I, applying my handkerchief to his eyes, "for a moment suppose me Emmeline as I read.

"Dear flattering girl," tenderly embracing me.

I continued to read on. But when I came to that part where you mention taking his letters from your bosom, he could contain himself no longer. "O, sister, sister, then I have touched her heart at last!"

"Wounded it through and through," said I: "don't you find it fluttered all to pieces?"

"Wou'd I could be sure of it," added he; "but you know not what I have suffered respecting her sentiments about Sir Edward Warren!—O, I have lived a life of misery ever since I introduced him to her."

"Why

“ Why then you are a fool, Harry ; that’s all. But for that matter, every man in love is little better. You see women are obliged to add prudence to passion, that they may have something to secure the affections of the husband, after they have lost the lover.”

“ Do you think, Sophy, were Emmeline mine, I could ever love her less as a wife than a mistress ?”

“ Why, I have no reason to think, brother, that my mother, when she brought you into the world, produced a *phœnix*.”

Do you know, Emmeline, my father seems as much at a loss for his plaything as his son. Therefore, hasten to us, if you would wish to hear the denouement of the history of Charles Clarkson and Sophia Courtland.—Remember, you have always the best wishes of the family at Wellburn. Adieu.

S. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXXIV.

H. Courtland, *Esq.*; to G. Montrose, *Esq.*

I HAVE at length reached the climax of misery!—'Tis not in the power of fortune to afflict me more!—I have lost Emmeline!—I will be just to her memory, though she be dead to me. She never loved me; and frail hope has led me on to ruin!

The night I arrived at Roselands, my sister received such a letter from her as filled me with the most animating hopes. My father, seeing the struggles of my mind, proposed, that spight of Emmeline's injunctions, I should set off the next morning to Fernley Meads; and after resting a few days there, I should attend her and Mrs. Aylbert to celebrate an annual visit at Sir Jacob Lambton's, where he and my sister would join us. The Darnley family was also expected to be there.

That this proposal was agreeable to my wishes, you will find, by the alacrity with which I set about executing it.

By four o'clock the next morning I was in my chaise. Within a mile of Fernley

Fernley Meads, stands a small town, which I purposed making my headquarters, till I knew what reception would be granted me at Mrs. Aylbert's. Having some experience of the perverseness of woman's mind, I apprehended I should not be an invited guest by the very person to whom my visit was intended.

You will easily guess my emotions were violent, when I thought the period was arrived that was to elucidate all my doubts and confirm my wishes.

The house stands in a valley, surrounded by hills. I quitted my carriage about a quarter of a mile from it, determining to pursue the rest of my journey on foot, to catch my angel by surprise. I had not walked a hundred paces, when I perceived a little green gate, which opened from a shrubbery to the great road. I stood for some time leaning against it, surveying, with great pleasure, this truly picturesque spot; my bosom yielding at the same time to a thousand delightful sensations.

"To these trees," said I to myself, "I am indebted for having afforded shelter to my angel during the intense heat of the sun; and, under that oak, who knows but she has tasted the fragrance

grance of the surrounding flowers; and the goldfinch which warbles on yonder spray, perhaps, has soothed her spirits with his song."

In the midst of reflections such as these, I heard the rattling of a carriage within the gate. On a nearer approach, I discovered it to be a cabriole, with Emmeline and Sir George Warren in it!

I did survive the shock, because I live to tell you of it.—He stopped the horses a moment, to gather from a blossoming shrub some flowers, which he presented Emmeline; she stuck them in her bosom; they drove on. The delay gave me time to recover my senses a little, when the servant advanced to open the gate against which I was leaning.

"By my soul," said Sir Edward, "here is Mr. Courtland!"

"Good God, can it be!—Is it possible!" said my once adored Emmeline, turning as pale as guilt could make her.

"And why should you be surprised, Madam, at seeing me?—To a citizen of the world, all places are alike. I have no home but where my pleasures call me. I have been some time enjoying the beauties of this delectable spot; and now my inclinations call me elsewhere. I hope, Madam, Mrs. Aylbert is well; and that she

she will excuse my want of leisure to pay my respects to her."

"I concluded," said Sir George, "you were come to stay some time in the country."

"Faith, not ten minutes longer," rejoined I: "the business which brought me hither is settled already. My carriage and servants are only at the bottom of the hill."

"I think," said Miss Ackworth, coldly, "I can venture to say, Mrs. Aylbert will be very glad to see you, Mr. Courtland."

"I must get you then, Madam, to make my excuses to her; for, if possible, I must be at Courtland Manor by to-morrow night. I have business to transact there of the utmost importance. But I have letters for you, Madam, from my father and sister"—presenting them.

But, Heavens! George, what became of me, when my trembling hand touched her's (more cold than ice—quite deprived of that vital warmth which could enable her to hold them)!—On Warren's putting them again into her hands, I begged my compliments might be presented to Mrs. Aylbert; and, bowing gaily, wished them a pleasant ride, and went back to my carriage, into which I had no sooner

sooner thrown myself, than all my boasted courage forsook me ; and when it reached the inn, there I should have remained, had not Wilson dragged me out by force.

The worthy fellow, from what he saw, guessed at what passed in my mind, and ordered some refreshments, of which, he knew, I stood in great need, for I would lose no time on the road, so eager was I to embrace my——. No—not *my Emeline*—but Sir Edward Warren's!

I continued walking the room in an agitation of spirits till I was quite exhausted. In my frenzy I called for pen and ink, sat down, and wrote Warren a challenge. When it was done, I ordered Wilson to deliver it into his own hands, as he valued my future regard. He looked as if unwilling to obey my commands : in a peremptory voice I bade him begone. He still lingered, till, falling on his knees, he entreated I would not send the note ; for he feared it was written in too great a hurry to do me credit. “ Only keep it, dear Sir, till to-morrow morning. In the mean time, you can re-consider it, and copy it over again.”

By this I found the honest fellow had fully guessed at the contents of my note. “ What,” said I, with quickness, “ do you suppose then——”

“ Yes, Sir ; if you wont be angry, I do suppose it was a small hint to Sir Edward Warren, that you wish to blow his brains out.—Only, Sir, write half a line to that sweet lady ; and I would risk my life to deliver it, if it were necessary—Yes, I would, though Sir Edward himself pointed a pistol at my breast : and so, Sir, if you please, Sir, I’ll put this letter into the fire ; and when you have taken a cup of coffee, which is always of service to you when you have the head-ach—You’ll then be in a better cue for writing.”

Much more he said to the same purpose, which happily gave me time for recollection.—“ Good Heavens !” exclaimed I to myself, “ shall I attempt the life of a man because his prospects in life are fairer than my own ?—Shall I send a wretch into eternity because he has discovered merit in a work which I thought perfect.—No ! good God, I thank thee, that thou upheldest me in the hour of trial, when reason had forsaken me !—Henceforth to thy guidance I submit myself ; and, O leave me not to the frail suggestions of my own imperfect nature.”

I cannot proceed.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXXV.

To the Same.

IF I can, dear George, I will piece my narrative, which was broken off abruptly.—After I had brought my mind to what I thought composure, I wrote the following to Miss Ackworth :

B I L L E T.

“ Madam,

“ I AM no longer at a loss for the reason which made you so strenuously oppose my visits at Fernley Meads ; and do not apprehend I will ever urge your delicacy further on that head. I have no reason to complain : to me you have broken no vows—no promise—You never made me any.

“ A hint from you should have sufficed. I would have withheld myself from Roselands : you should not have been driven to the necessity of receiving Sir George Warren’s visits at Fernley Meads. I would have spared you all the trouble of so long a journey, by absenting myself.

“ I now

“ I now see my imprudent passion in its proper light. I have been rash—but I will never be cruel: I will never place my pretensions in opposition to your happiness. On finding I am not the destined object, to procure it, I withdraw my claim —“ Fond—foolish feelings—begone.”

“ O, my Emmeline (for the last time let me call you so), how have I loved you!—So very tenderly, you made up my sum of earthly happiness!—But I am punished for my presumption; and my peace is made the sacrifice.

“ If the angels in Heaven erred, can we be surprised to find imperfections in the creature?—Yet I fondly thought my Emmeline all perfect.

“ I hope by this time you have laid all the “*secrets of your heart*” before Mrs. Aylbert; which, you told me at our last meeting, was the principal intention of your visit to her.—Pray tell Sir George Warren, his wishes meet my hearty concurrence.

“ Yet I should hazard an untruth to say, the fond remembrance of past scenes was entirely blotted from my mind—No, there is a tender recollection which still hangs about my heart. I will not shake it off: it is dear to me; it shall descend into the grave with me.

“ How

“ How I have loved you!—But why should I tinge the white minutes of your life, by tracing out the sable hue of mine? For you have a gentle heart, and may drop a tear at griefs you want the power to remove.—But, alas! 'tis not in the power of friendship to heal the wounds of unrequited love!

“ Adieu for ever;—and believe me your most affectionate friend, and faithful humble servant,

H. COURTLAND.”

When I had finished the above, I ordered Wilson to deliver it to the first servant he saw, and to return without making any further enquiry; yet such was my weakness, I longed with the utmost impatience for his return, expecting to hear something.

At length he returned; but with a countenance expressive of the greatest affliction, the tears streaming down his honest face.

“ Good Heavens!” cried I, “ what new evil does thy forlorn countenance announce?—Give me the letter”—mechanically holding out my hand, as if I expected one.

“ Have you forgot then, Sir, you ordered me to return without one; but you

you might have spared yourself the trouble, for the poor dear lady is hardly in a condition for writing."

" You have seen her then, Wilson? Quick, quick, tell me all you know."

" Seen her, Sir!—yes, that I have; and heard her too."

" Well, well, order the horses: as there is no answer to my letter, I shall set off for the Manor immediately.—But, dear Wilson, how did she look?"

" Just, for the world, Sir, as if she were carrying to her grave. I can tell your honour a great deal more when we get home; but I'll order the horses immediately"—going.

" Nay, nay, come back" (grasping his arm); " I had rather hear all you have to say before we set out; for I have steeled my heart, Wilson."

" And 'tis well you have, Sir; or it would break before I had half done my story.—You must know, Sir, I met the poor dear young lady on the very spot where you saw her to-day, but looking so pale and wan, I thought she would have swooned at the sight of me. Not doubting but your letter was crammed with kind words, 'thank my stars,' says I to myself, 'I have that in my pocket will call the blood again into those lips;' and so

so the colour did begin to mantle on her cheeks—when I says, ‘ Ma’am, my master sends his kind love to you,’ giving her the letter. I’m sure she hadn’t read it half through, when she said her head was a little giddy of a sudden, and she would sit down on the bank to finish the rest.”

“ Leave me, leave me,” interrupted I, in an agony; “ I cannot bear it. But, no, come back.—And so she sat herself down on the bank: why, she might have been wearied with walking?—O, no, no, no: she complained her head was giddy; and she looked all gentle sweetness—Did she, Wilson?” eagerly asked I.

“ Meek as a lamb, Sir; and, the tears streaming from her sweet eyes as she continued reading your letter, my heart beat in my bosom like a dying bird’s.—Well, Sir, after she had finished your letter, she laid it upon her lap, whilst her tears trickled over it like hail.—‘ I am sure, Madam,’ says I at length, ‘ if my master were here, he would not let you sit so long upon the cold ground.’—‘ Never fear me, Mr. Wilson,’ said she, with a sigh that made my heart quake; ‘ nothing can hurt me *now*.’ She then tried to read the letter afresh; but soon put it up in her pocket, saying, her eye-sight was none of the best, and she would finish it

when

when she got home. She then asked me, as she found herself not quite strong, if I would lend her my arm.—‘ To be sure, Ma’am,’ says I ; ‘ but wou’d to Heaven my master were here to offer you his. I’m sure he would go distracted, if he were to know how weak you are.’—‘ Why, to be sure, Mr. Wilson, he has been very kind and attentive to me ; but—’ Here we walked slowly on to the house : she spoke never a word till we reached the parlour ; she sunk into the first chair ; when I offered to go into the hall, and wait till she was enough recovered to write an answer to your letter. She said she was much obliged for my good-will, but the letter required no answer. ‘ But, Madam,’ says I, ‘ I shall be afraid to see my master’s face without one.’ I thought, after this, I heard her breathe short ; and, looking up to her face, I perceived she was as dead as a tomb-stone.”

My heart-rending exclamations, Montrose, did not break off the thread of his story—He continued.

“ I rung the bell, Sir, as if the house were on fire : all the servants came running into the room. I did not see Mrs. Aylbert ; she was confined with the rheumatism. In the midst of the rumpus came

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came in Sir Edward Warren. I'm sure it was by accident. Raising her gently in his arms, he appeared as sorry, Sir, as you could have been. We all now quitted the room, leaving only the house-keeper with her.—But I am certain sure, Sir, she knew nothing of Sir Edward's visit; for I spoke to his servant, who was leading his horse in the yard; and he told me that his master only called to enquire after Mrs. Aylbert's health, which is much better."

Uncertain how to act, or what to think, I ordered my carriage, and drove hither with all the expedition my horses could use. But I did not lose the torturing thought, by the way, of my Emmeline fainting in the arms of my rival!

I believe, so much travelling as I have had in a few days, without any intermission of rest, added to the anxieties of my mind, have heated my blood. I have not been, nor am I now, quite well, though better for the officious care of Wilson, who, of his own accord, surprised me with a physician.—I get no rest; continued wakefulness greatly aggravates my complaint, which the doctor tells me is a fever on the spirits; and he advises company and gentle exercise.—If I am better, whatever it costs me, I will be at Sir

Sir Jacob Lambton's at the time appointed. I have written both to my father and sister, without mentioning a syllable of what passed between me and the idol of my soul. No—let the deceitful syren tell her own story.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXXVI.

Miss Courtland to Miss Ackworth.

Lambton Park.

MY brother, dear Emmeline, did not reach Lambton Park till the day after us; but so pale, so emaciated, that, ill as he used you, it would have shocked you to behold him.—I did not think him a master of so much art; for he affected a gaiety of temper which was foreign to his feelings, as he never once uttered your name. I determined to bend his stubborn nature, by observing a profound silence. He sported a thousand little gallantries with Lady Augusta, to shew his bravery.—“ Poor boy,”

thought

thought I, " I shall humble thee presently for all this."

At dinner, the butler carelessly threw a glass of Burgundy down Lady Augusta's white lustring gown, which my gallant brother was officiously wiping off, when Lady Lambton expressed to my father how sorry she was for the accident which deprived her of the pleasure of Miss Ackworth's company ; and added, she hoped it would be attended with no *danger*.

Pale as death looked your poor swain,
My father said, he hoped not ; that
the surgeon had assured him, there were
no bones broken.

I am sure I heard my brother's heart
beat through his waistcoat. He looked
the statue of despair, but spoke not.—
Her ladyship requested to hear the par-
ticulars of your accident, if it were not
too much trouble. My father continued.

" A very disagreeable event having
happened to my dear child at Fernley
Meads, she entreated Mrs. Aylbert, who
was indisposed, to permit her housekeeper
to attend her home. Within about three
miles of our house, the driver being in-
toxicated, overturned the chaise from a
precipice. Luckily, Mr. Falkner riding
that

that way, rescued her from immediate death, and delivered her up to us covered with blood, with scarcely any remains of life about her."

Mr. Clarkson, Emmeline (for he would be here), said, "Falkner must feel himself a happy man, to have preserved a life so valuable."

My poor brother could hear no more; but, mustering up his courage, quitted the room. Lady Lambton said, she was fearful he was ill; for he looked pale.— My father and I looked at each other, pretty well guessing at the cause.

In a few minutes, Wilson whispered me, that his master begged to see me, if but for a moment. After making my apologies to the company, I left the room: when behold I found this once gallant, high-spirited gentleman, reduced almost to the weakness of a child.

"Oh! my sister," grasping my hands, "though I have lost my Emmeline's affections, yet her life is dear to me as ever."

"Pish—is that all?—Why should her life be dear to you, whose pleasure it is to afflict it with pain?"

"Cruel, cruel girl; to sport with my feelings, when my soul is on the rack.

May I not ask then, if the dear girl has received any material hurt by her fall?"

" I hope not. A dislocated shoulder—a contusion over one eye—with a pretty deep cut across the left cheek—seem to be her principal injuries, besides being dreadfully bruised from head to foot."

" That she is preserved at any rate," cried he, " I am thankful, even though I am indebted for her life to Sir Edward Warren."

" Have you lost your sences, brother? How came Sir Edward Warren into your head?"

" O, sister, sister, 'tis long since he has ever been out of it!"

" Mr. Falkner, I tell you, was the knight who rescued the distressed damsel. Her fall, however, though it has brought on a temporary spitting of blood, yet we hope it will not end in a decline; for your unjust suspicions relative to Sir Edward Warren have reduced her to a state of extreme weakness. She is very ill indeed."

" Then, good God defend me—How shall I bear it?—What is life without hope?"

" Emmeline is quite of your opinion, brother; and not a smile has beamed upon

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upon her face since your cruel treatment of her the day you met her with Sir Edward Warren, who was on a visit to an uncle that lives in Mrs. Aylbert's neighbourhood: though, to be sure, he has persecuted the poor girl with his officious love, which she has constantly repulsed; and, in lieu of it, has made your last *kind letter* the subject of her meditations."

"I have been cruelly misled, my dear Sophy.—O, if you have any affection for me, write to the dear sufferer;—tell her of my penitence—my despair—"

"Well then, if I must take your cause in hand, don't vent your spleen on your ruffles; they are immensely handsome, and I have heard Emmeline admire the pattern—What, are they Valencienne, Brussels, or——?"

"Dear, dear girl, don't distract me with such trifles. Write instantly to my angel, and tell her——O, no; that's impossible: no pen can tell how much I love her!"

However, at his request, I have written thus far; which I shall dispatch immediately by a private hand.—Adieu.

S. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXXVII.

H. Courtland, *E/q*; to G. Montrose, *E/q*.

Roselands.

I WENT, as my last informed you I would, to Lambton Park; for something whispered my bosom I should there find the object of its tenderest wishes; for, when alone, I had well weighed my conduct, and much had blamed myself for my precipitancy. Guess, if you can, how much I was alarmed on my arrival there, to find that a dreadful accident had detained her at Roselands, where she flew the morning after she received my unfortunate letter.

When my sister had put me *au fait* of all the dangers which had befallen her friend, I made my excuses to Lady Lambton, and left the Park, unknown to any of the guests but my father and sister.

But you cannot conceive, George, what a torrent of plagues again beset me, on seeing Sir Edward Warren's carriage at my father's door. As I drove up, I called to the postillions to stop; and bade them drive me any where but home.—

Wilfion,

Wilson, guessing what passed in my mind, said, he wished Dr. Patterson would lay Sir Edward Warren's spirit in the Red Sea, for it was crossing us every where.

"Order the carriage to be turned then," said I, "and let us drive to Dr. Patterson's immediately."—He and Falkner were from home; but his kind, benevolent wife came out to welcome me. She saw by my countenance I was in affliction; and with great hesitation enquired if all friends were well.

Pity, George, but do not despise, my weakness—I burst into tears. She asked if I had been at Roselands.

"O, yes," returned I; "but never more to return thither."

"Good heavens!" rejoined she, "what has happened?"

"That," replied I, "my dearest Mrs. Patterson, which the world combined cannot restore to me, I have lost!"

"Dear Sir, you make me tremble with apprehension! — What have you lost?"

"The joy and pride of my heart—My Emmeline."

At that instant, I saw my father's coach drive up the avenue.

"As I live," cried Mrs. Patterson, "here is Miss Ackworth!—What can bring her hither at this late hour!"

"Then, for heaven's sake," said I, "do not let me see her"—(though my eyes were straining to catch a glance of her.)

"No," said Mrs. Patterson, holding my arm, "you shall not go, Sir: here is some misunderstanding, which I hope will soon be cleared up."

Whilst we were debating the point, the dear creature (with looks—ah! how changed from what I have seen them!) entered. On seeing me, she drew back, fell into Mrs. Patterson's arms, and, for a moment, her head sunk upon her bosom: then recovering breath, she exclaimed, "Ah, Madam, what brings Mr. Courtland hither?—Why does he look so terribly upon me?—I am very weak—I cannot bear his anger."

"I believe, my dear," said she, "Mr. Courtland labours under some misapprehension about you; and the sooner you clear up matters to him the better. I will leave you for the purpose."

"O, no, no," (clasping her arms still closer about her)—"Let me suppose you my dear mother for a moment,

moment, and in your maternal arms find a shelter from the resentment of an angry man."

" Do not fear, my dear Miss Ackworth," cried I, " of meeting my resentment—No, my mind is too much humbled to entertain revenge. I am going instantly—I believe my horses are not taken from the carriage; and I will only add, 'tis my fervent wish that Heaven may shower its choicest gifts on *you*, whatever be the fate of the most wretched of men."—I was going—Mrs. Patterson hung by my arm, protesting I should not stir.

" O, stay one moment, let me conjure you," said my angel—" I have much to say; but my head is not clear. Till I knew you, Mr. Courtland, my bosom was the seat of peace: you have studied its weaknesses; and where you found it most accessible, there you never rested till you had robbed it of its precious guest. In exchange you sent me this"—(producing the letter I wrote at Fernley Meads)—" but I will wear it next my heart"—(again returning it to her bosom)—" that it may teach it to know its duty, how hard soever be the task enjoined it."—She wept bitterly,

I 4 and,

and, after a short pause, threw herself on the window-seat.

In the mean time, my eyes glanced over a note that lay open on the table, which I knew to be Emmeline's writing. As nearly as I can recollect, it was conceived in these words—

“DO an act of charity, dear Mrs. Patterson, and fly to me this moment. The man I have reason to dread above all others (Sir Edward Warren), is here.—I am almost distracted at the idea.—He surprised me before I could give orders to be denied.—Hasten to me then, my dear friend, if you would wish peace of mind to

EMMELINE ACKWORTH.”

“Enough, my dear Mrs. Patterson,” cried I: “this note has cleared all my doubts. Come, join with me to entreat my forgiveness of my much-abused Emmeline.”

I sat down by her; and whilst I implored her pardon, I took her hand, which was cold as death: I next laid my hand on her forehead, which was covered with a cold clammy sweat; her teeth chattered—her lips grew livid—and an universal shivering seized her. She

She said she was sleepy; but spoke no more, and sunk into a state of total insensibility.

“Great Heaven! she is dying,” exclaimed I; “and by my cruelty—Yes, I have murdered all that is lovely on earth!”

I was not long able to vent my grief in words over the sweet sufferer. She breathed; and her fainting had all the appearance of a sweet sleep for near an hour that I held her in my arms.

When she came perfectly to herself, no language was wanting to explain to her the situation of my mind.—I tenderly urged her to pardon what was past.

“My weak heart, Mr. Courtland,” said she, “pleads strongly in your favour, against my judgment.—You see, Mrs. Patterson” (in a languishing voice), “to what mortifying humiliations proud spirits reduce themselves!”

“Can I be too humble, my charming Emmeline,” replied I, “when I entreat for what is dearer than life?—The world may blame my conduct, my dear Mrs. Patterson, towards this sweet girl; but the cruel silence she has for so many months imposed upon me, made me look upon every man who approached her, as a rival.”

Mrs. Patterson said, I was mistaken, if I thought my regard for her charming friend was a secret; for that it was impossible it should remain such an hour, to those who saw us together.

My Emmeline blushed.—I proposed our returning home immediately; which Mrs. Patterson would not permit, till I had taken some refreshment, knowing that I had not dined; and my angel seconded her request.

My appetite was too high set for vulgar renovation—I was impatient to be gone; and after taking a glass of wine, I caught my treasure in my arms, carried her to the coach (which was still in waiting), and, throwing myself by her, felt a joy unknown to my bosom till that moment. I then poured forth all the tender effusions of my soul; to which my Emmeline listened with a pleased attention.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Miss Ackworth to Miss Courtland.

Roselands.

WHY send your ungovernable brother to me?—Alas! I am too weak at present to curb the impetuosity of a madman. But, good heavens! in what a whirlwind of rage did we meet at Mrs. Patterson's!—I shall reserve the subject till I see you. Sir Edward Warren again!—Now guess the rest.

Mr. Courtland was too much taken up with his own affairs over-night to give me your letter, which you hinted I should receive by a private hand. He produced it the next morning at breakfast, and then only on condition (let the contents be what they would) that I should read them aloud: but you may be assured I would subscribe to no such terms. Then rising from table, and placing his chair next mine, he attempted to retake the letter which he had just given me. I stared at his effrontery; but he, not the least abashed, still persisted in his design. I reasoned with him: he said, love like his was not

to be influenced by so cold a pleader as Reason.

"Your sex, Mr. Courtland," said I, "seldom fail of teasing *mine* into a compliance with your wishes, when your arguments fail."

"Why, if we cannot convince your understandings by force of argument," added he, "what other resource have we?—Therefore, depend upon it, I will not cease my persecution till you either give me the letter, or promise to read it yourself aloud.—Consider, dearest creature, the glory you will acquire by yielding; for otherwise, depend upon it, you must submit to the mortification of being conquered—as I am resolute."

"I won't be threatened, Sir."

"Nor I won't be trifled with, Madam; for I must and will see how two such girls write to each other."

On finding my strength very unequal to his, I was obliged to yield. He would read it aloud, which provoked me the more. I sat sullen, sipping my tea—sometimes full of apprehension, lest his whimsical remarks should have called forth a smile on my countenance.

"What a monster this paragraph makes me?" added he. Then proceeded—"Here the austerity of my features

features is somewhat softened—and here—O, my dear sister, when next you draw your brother's picture, a little less gall in your ink, if you please.”—Then again—“Bravo!—we mend as we go on.—Why, really, sister, you colour your pictures very highly. That feature is a little too strongly marked with jealousy, if you please: and this—O, she dresses the character too—Now, we come to the ruffles—they are unworthy our attention. But hold—here is something; that is, ‘I shall send this by a private hand.’—Very well, Ma’am; and now, I recollect, ‘tis time I should be paid the postage,” (catching me in his arms.)

I was so provoked at his rudeness, that I flew from him to my apartment, and wrote a note, to ask Mrs. Patterson to spend the day with us, the Doctor and Mr. Falkner being from home.—Adieu.

E. ACKWORTH.

LETTER XXXIX.

H. Courtland, Esq.; to G. Montrose, Esq.

Roselands.

THOUGH my heart's supremest wish is accomplished, in possessing that of my dearest Emmeline; yet my pen cannot shape my ideas into any form, to describe to you what happiness is, if you have never felt it.—It is like then—No—Upon my soul, I cannot tell you what it is like. But it is something that seems so nearly bordering on the extremes of pain, that it corrodes the joys of possessing.

What inanimate soul ever talked of the power of harmony, who has heard the transporting sounds of—“*I love you*”—breathed from the ruby lips of the object of his fondest wishes?

My Emmeline's disposition is candid—frank—generous; for now that she can confess her regard for me without violating her duty, she has laid open to me all the struggles of her mind, from our first meeting, and the pains she took, from the knowledge she had of my conduct

duct to other women, to drive me from her heart.

You will conclude, George, that, for such a confession, I was all grateful rapture; and, so agitated were my feelings, that I hurried from her into the garden, till the violence of them were a little subsided; yet I am far from well. But if I can keep up, I will not alarm her fears by disclosing it. The fever I had at the Manor frequently returns, preceded by strong shiverings; but I hope in a day or two all will be well again.

You would not have been plagued with a letter to-day, George, but that my angel, since her accident, is so weak, she is ordered by the surgeon, who still attends her, to lay down an hour or two every day.—Ah, how unlike is she to all the fantastical women I have hitherto had any commerce with, who can weep for a lap-dog, yet behold humanity labouring under the heaviest oppression, without gracing it with a tear!

The woman who attacks you with her dress, has generally a weak head and an unlettered mind. Now, a man has no reason to complain who suffers himself to be the dupe of her drapery.

This brings to my mind a conversation I lately had in Warwickshire with my

my old school fellow, Sir William Bruton, whom I had not seen for some years, and who was then on the point of marriage with one of these frippery-ladies, whose hours, out of company, are all spent at the toilet.

“ How now, old acquaintance,” said I, clapping him on the shoulder, “ does the delirium of the senses run as high seven years after marriage as it did seven hours before ? ”

“ Do, pri’thee, Courtland, ask that question of a man who loved a woman for the beauties of her mind, rather than the graces of her person. Good sense, and good humour, will make any woman handsome ; but mere beauty, when void of a well-cultivated understanding, is a solitary companion for a husband, after it becomes familiar to him ; and, harkee, Courtland, if you would avoid the greatest curse in life, take care never to marry a *fine lady.* ”

“ I hope, Sir William, you do not derive your knowledge from experience ? ”

“ Yes, but I do tho’ ; and have gained a vast stock of patience into the bargain, which is all that a fine lady bequeaths her husband to pay off her debts.”

“ And

“ And a very good legacy too, Sir William—if it will content her creditors.”

“ That is no concern of her’s, whether it will or not: her taste for expence must be gratified, though to the total ruin of her husband; for Vanity is never troubled with the sickly qualms of conscience for the injuries it does to others.”

“ This is an alarming picture, Sir William, to a man who is on the very brink of matrimony.”

“ Not at all, Courtland, provided you have chosen a rational creature to make the voyage of life with you; and not with a woman who has no taste, no joy for any thing but dissipation. As to my wife, she has no affection for any thing earthly but herself; for the heart of Vanity is always chilled by an ague-fit of folly.”

“ Come, come, Sir William, you don’t do your lady justice—She certainly once loved you.”

“ Loved me—Yes, I believe she loves me now as well as any thing, except her new set of French feathers—her squirrel—or her lap-dog. I have two children—and very pretty children they are—but their innocent prattle makes their mother nervous; and so they are confined

fined to the nursery, whilst pug is placed at table, to receive the caresses of their mama. And if I am confined to my chamber for a week together with the gout, I never see her; for her spirits are so weak that she can't bear to see any body suffer pain."

"But do you never expostulate, Sir William?"

"What the devil, Courtland!—Did expostulation ever yet avail with a woman who is too proud for conviction, and too weak for argument.—To be sure, nature formed me for the domestic life; but I have cursedly missed my way in looking after it: and as my temper is rather indolent, to avoid recrimination in town, I chiefly spend my evenings in taverns, with a party whose homes are not better formed for society than my own; and so we drown our cares in Champagne and Burgundy, till the daylight breaks in upon the debauch of the night; and then we get home, to lose in sleep past pleasures and past cares. But ten to one if our slumbers be not interrupted by a peal of thunder which the footman lets off at the street-door, to announce the return of our *very* affectionate and *truly* loving wives."

This

This is the subject of my conversation with the poor baronet: and when you find a lady whom the above will suit, shew her this; and then ask her how she likes her character on paper.

Adieu for the present.—Falkner returns to-morrow. I shall then hasten to him—tell him of all my past fears on his account—ask his pardon for many parts of my conduct, which must have appeared so unjustifiable to him, as he was a stranger to my motives—and to offer him in future the unreserved confidence of the most sincere friendship.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XL.

Miss Ackworth to Mrs. Aylbert.

Roselands.

“**T**O mourn without measure, is folly; not to mourn at all, is insensibility,” says a celebrated writer.

Alas! dearest Madam, I fear my portion of sorrow is yet to come, tenderly beloved as I am by the best of men.—Mr. Falkner is very suddenly taken dangerously

gerously ill. Mr. Courtland went to see him immediately on his return; staid two hours with him; and left him, as he believed, in perfect health: but he had not been returned an hour, when a messenger came over to say, Mr. Falkner was taken in a fit the moment Mr. Courtland left the house; and they were under the most dreadful apprehensions that he would survive but a short time.

“Great God!” cried Mr. Courtland, “then 'tis I that have killed him!”—He left me with the utmost precipitation; and taking the horse on which the messenger came, rode as fast as it could carry him to Dr. Patterson's. I have long loved poor Falkner as a brother; and therefore could not withhold from him the tender sorrows of a sister—I was drowned in tears when Mr. Courtland returned.

“Hate me—hate me, dearest Emmeline,” cried he; “for in me you behold a murderer!—Yes, dearest girl, I am the innocent cause of Falkner's death!—His reason is totally overthrown; and if ever a momentary ray returns, he exclaims, ‘Where is the murderer gone?’—There is now but one way by which your Courtland can wipe out the cursed appellation, and it shall be tried. O, help me—encourage

courage me to do a deed, to erase the horrid thought from out my mind!"

In this state of frenzy, he was going back to Wellburn. I hung upon his arm, protesting he should not leave me, till I could trust him safely with himself; "for if you are unhappy," said I, "O, let me share it with you. My life has been all sunshine, compared with this sad moment. Say something to give me comfort—your looks distract me!"

"My father will comfort you, my best love—My sister also will comfort you—But I have none to give you."

I made use of every tender persuasion, to draw the secret from him; which only seemed to aggravate his sorrow.—He is gone again to Dr. Patterson's. What the event of this visit may be, Heaven only knows!

MR. COURTLAND is returned again: but shut himself up in his apartment immediately; so that I have not seen him. What I feel, it is impossible to describe! My spirits quite forsake me—I can write no more.

I AM quite worn down by anxiety.—What a day and night have I passed!—It is now two o'clock in the morning—Mr. Courtland not yet returned from Dr. Patterson's!—Had he good news to impart, surely he would not leave me thus long a prey to the bitterest grief.—But I hear his footsteps. O! my foreboding heart!—Yet, to know the worst, will be some satisfaction.—I will fly to meet him.

I no sooner saw him, than I sunk spiritless into his arms.

“Good heavens!” cried he, “I was hurrying to my Emmeline for comfort; and is this all she brings me!—There are hopes of Falkner's life; but there are none of comfort for your Courtland!”

“You talk in riddles!”

“No, my sweet love,” added he; “that I am eternally wretched, is no riddle. But 'tis late—Let me entreat you to go to bed; your spirits want rest. In the morning, we may both be more composed;

composed ; for I must leave you, my dearest life."

"Leave me!" cried I ; "and to whom would you go?—Where would you find a friend who would more readily divide your sorrows with you than your Emmeline?"

"Do not torture me with this kindness," added he ; "it but adds to the anguish of my spirit."—(He rang the bell—Mrs. Brett came in.)—"Take care of this dear angel," said he ; "and watch by her the remaining part of the night."

I said, I would not quit him till he gave me a solemn promise that he would endeavour to rest also.

"Rest!—Rest!" repeated he, wildly. "Do you love me, Emmeline?"

"And can you doubt it, after the proofs I have already given you?"

"Then I'm sorry for it!"

"And why are you sorry for it?" laying my hand upon his arm.

"Because—because," cried he, "it makes the evil the more complicate ; and I fear to-morrow will be a day of trial indeed, to my best love. But encourage me, dearest Emmeline, to meet misfortune boldly ; for here," (laying his hand

hand on his heart)—“ here I feel I am a coward !”

I took his hand. I found it parched with heat ; and Brett told him, she feared a fever would be the consequence, if he did not speedily provide some remedy against it.

“ Against it, Brett !” said he. “ What ! provide a remedy against an evil that robs me of pain for ever ?”

“ Think of the anxiety of your friends, Sir !—Think what will be the sufferings of this poor young lady !”

“ I can’t think, Mrs. Brett—I am past thinking—My mind is all torture !” striking his forehead.

After this, he spoke not a word for near an hour ; which I devoted to sighs and tears. I thought at last he grew heavy, and seemed disposed to sleep.—I slipped out of the room, ordering Wilson carefully to attend to his behaviour.

I then went to my own apartment, but not to bed—I passed the rest of the night in a great-chair ; and, on coming down in the morning, I had the satisfaction to hear that Mr. Falkner had been mending ever since Mr. Courtland quitted him ; and that the General and Sophy were arrived, who had been sent for express.

I longed

I longed to be the messenger of such welcome intelligence to Mr. Courtland; and therefore sent up to enquire how he did, and to inform him that breakfast waited.

He appeared soon after, leaning upon Wilson; but his disturbed countenance plainly spoke how he had passed the night. He was very pale; yet there was an alarming quickness in his eye that made me shudder: his lips too were of a livid hue, and his respiration seemed much oppressed.

When I had made proper enquiries after his health, I presented him with a basin of tea, telling him he must drink it, to enable him to bear the good news I had for him. I put it to his lips; he drank it, and seemed much affected with my kindness.—I then told him that his father was expected every minute; and that he had been two hours with Mr. Falkner, who began to mend from the time he left him last night.

“ To be sure,” cried he, wildly, “ I gave him life—gave him all—left myself a bankrupt!—But do you really love me, Emmeline?”

“ Why again that question, my dearest Sir?”

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“ Because—

“ Because—because,” shaking his head, “ it gives my soul a keener relish of its anguish. I would not have you love me—O ! 'tis hell, 'tis torture but to think on't!”—Then throwing himself back on the sofa, in a few moments he became motionless as a corpse.

My cries brought all the servants about us. At that moment the General and Sophy entered.—“ Ah, my good God!” cried I, on seeing them, “ he is gone—he is gone!—Take me—take me from him, and save my heart the pang of seeing him expire !”

The servants then attempted to carry me out ; but my screams (they since told me) resounded through the whole house. “ No, no,” throwing my arms round my dear Mr. Courtland, who appeared quite breathless, “ I will die here—it will save trouble.”

It was some hours before they could make me sensible that Mr. Courtland was still living—the dear General and Sophy dividing their attention between us.

When I recovered, I found myself sitting on the floor, leaning my head on Mrs. Brett's shoulder.

The General, gently raising me in his arms, entreated me to be comforted ; for though

though his son's malady was violent, he hoped it would not be fatal. Then led me to Mr. Courtland, who seemed to be just awakened out of a stupor.

He exclaimed, on seeing me, "Surely I have been in a dream; yet my sleep has been very imperfect; for all the while my ears seem to have been invaded by the voice of sorrow, which still clings about me."

"Come, come; take this medicine," said his sister, "and your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

"No, no," replied he; "joy cannot live in that breast which is deserted by hope; and as to medicine," (putting it aside) "why, 'tis a cordial for sickly souls who fear to meet death, because they leave that which may make life a blessing. And who is this?" seeing me: "it is a shadow of something so like my Emmeline, I wish I could grasp it," extending his feeble arms.

"It is I—it is Emmeline," throwing myself into them. "Let me entreat you to be composed, if you would not kill us all with grief."

"If this be Emmeline," returned he, "then take her from me, because she said she loved me—I can bear any thing but that."

“ You will break her heart,” said his father, “ if you treat her thus cruelly.”

“ Dearest—best of women—I, I treat her cruelly?—I, who would die for her?—nay, *will* die!”

“ Come, take your medicine,” again repeated Sophy.

“ Well, I will.” (He drank it off.) “ But,” said he, “ will medicine stimulate my courage to heroic deeds?—Will medicine teach me how to do my duty—yet preserve my honour?—I have made a promise—a vow—and called the God of Heaven to witness it.”

“ And what did you vow, my dear boy?” said his father. “ What did you promise?”

“ O, nothing,” shaking his head wildly—“ Not much—it was not much; and yet my bosom feels its loss. It is become so cold—so cheerless without it, I know not what to do; for it kept all the springs of life in action. But a bitter blast ensued, froze up the genial current of my blood, and left me quite a wreck.”—Then starting on seeing me—“ Ah! what have I here?—Emmeline weeping on my bosom!—But I can’t dry her tears.—’Tis a long day that’s all dedicated to weeping; and sweet the night that bars reflection

reflection from the aching memory"—laying his hand on his head—"Oh!"

It is many days since I have been able to take up my pen. We have had two physicians from Bath, who pronounce Mr. Courtland's disorder to be a nervous fever; the foundation of which Wilson suspects to have been laid at Courtland Manor, from having imprudently drank water when he was exceedingly heated by travelling: a violent shivering succeeded it; after which he had often complained that he was far from well, but insisted it should not be mentioned in the family, still hoping it would go off.

His father has not quitted him a night since his illness: he talks and weeps alternately. The physicians do not think his life in danger; and could he get rest, his head would be more composed.

On finding him this morning a little refreshed, his sister told him she had news for him, which she expected would hasten his recovery: that Falkner mended very fast, and, she hoped, would soon be in a condition to visit him; "for he longs to thank you for the life you have given him," said she.

Instead of a reply, he was seized with a strong convulsion ; and it was full three hours before it left him.—O ! Madam, they were hours of exquisite anguish to all around him.

“ What, has Emmeline quite deserted me ? ” looking about him, when he came to himself. “ Can you tell me how many days it is since I saw her last ? — She is dead, perhaps, and nobody will venture to tell me of it.”

“ No, my dear child,” said his father, “ here is Emmeline, almost dying of grief at observing how ill you are. Look kindly on her ; and if you can, administer consolation to her affliction.”

“ Look at me, my dear, my excellent father. Do I look like a man who can offer comfort to the afflicted ? — No ; henceforward you shall be my Emmeline’s comforter. But can you tell me what it is that gives me this pain in my head ? ”

“ I wish I could, my dear boy,” replied his father. “ As you seem a little more composed, I beg you would tell me if you have any secret grief at heart ; for your doctors inform us, they would answer soon to cure your bodily disease, provided you have none of the mind. But they have the strongest suspicions that

that you have, as you frequently allude to the last conversation which you had with Mr. Falkner. Yet that cannot be, Mr. Falkner having related every sentence of that conversation to me." And the General tells us, nothing then passed but what his son must have derived pleasure, rather than pain, from.

He answered his father's interrogatives only with sighs; and soon after, I saw, by the quickness of his eye, his disorder was again returning.

"Can this be Emmeline?" said he, after a pretty long silence. "I fear, sister, you have deceived me: this is not the dear angel on whom my heart has so fondly doated—This is some child of sorrow—see how she weeps—how pale she is. Affliction is the very canker of beauty. Dearest sister, never let the world know how much I have loved her; nay, "I knew it not myself, till it was too late.—Be sure, never tell me she pities me—My heart is very tender—it would break it.—How very sad the soul is, my sweet love," (attempting to grasp my hand) "when all its peace is fled!—O! when will it return again to me!—Never—never—never!"

E. ACKWORTH.

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LETTER XLI.

To the Same. (In Continuation.)

IF I am incoherent, pardon me—I write only a few lines occasionally, without form or connexion. Concluding that I meet with your indulgence, as formerly, I'll proceed with my narrative.

Having heard that Mr. Courtland had had a much more composed night than usual, we assembled at breakfast with more satisfaction than we had done for many preceding days; when the butler came in to say, that Mr. Courtland had just sent to him for half a pint of brandy; but that he could not think of sending it up to him without further advice.

“Good heavens!” cried the General, “what is the matter with my poor boy's head?—What a wreck is his mind become!”

He then hastened to him, and found him up and dressed, as usual (for he has been very little confined to his bed), though extremely weak and emaciated. The General asked him, why he wanted brandy?

“Because,”

"Because," replied he, "it keeps up the courage, and makes men fit for desperate deeds."

His father told him, smiling, valorous deeds were not expected of him in his present condition.

It might be so, he said, when he was ill; but he was now well; and that he was about to do a deed which would make every fibre in his heart to shake. "But you must order the post-chaise—I don't think I can walk far."

"We shall see that," said his father, "if you will let me conduct you to the breakfast-parlour. Change of air may do you good."

Ó, Madam, never shall I forget his appearance on entering, leaning on the shoulder of his father, whose looks expressed the most tender benevolence.

" My dear girls," said the General, " I have brought my poor boy to breakfast with you." — Then placing him on the sofa, he asked me, if I would not sit by him ?

"What, has Emmeline been ill?" asked he, looking tenderly upon me— "And every body has been cruel enough not to tell me of it."

" You will make every body ill, my dear brother," said Miss Courtland, " if

you do not strive against this malady, which has taken such strong possession of your mind."

"I am quite well now, you see," shaking his head. "I have ordered the chaise; air will do me good: I am going to see Falkner, to congratulate him on his recovery. But don't ever expect me back again."

"And whither would you go?" said his father.

"To that happy country," returned he, "which I one day heard you read of, 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest;' for I am very tired"—sinking down. They all helped to support him.

Feeling I could not stand another violent shock, I was hurrying out of the room; when, with uncommon force, he sprang from his father's arms, and, catching my hand, exclaimed—"Stay one minute—one little minute—if you be Emmeline. The last pang will soon be over, and you must witness it."—Then, quite exhausted, he sunk upon the floor.—I threw myself by him. They laid his head on my lap; his father kneeling in silent anguish over the breathless body. Sophy had fainted away; but what still heightened the scene, was the exclamatory sorrow

sorrow of poor Wilson, who was on his knees by me, offering up his prayers to Heaven for the preservation of his dear master.—I wonder how I endured it—I was stupid—I was past all sense of feeling.

Happily this fainting procured him an hour's sleep afterwards; but we were under the most alarming apprehensions how he would act when he came to himself; yet he was much more composed and collected than we imagined, and asked if the carriage was ready?

“And where would you go, my love?” said his father. “Can you go where you will be more tenderly treated than with me?”

“Why, no. But I can't bear tender treatment; and for that reason I would fly from you—My heart is broken.”

“You will break all our hearts,” said Miss Courtland; “and as to poor Emeline here, you will be the death of her.”

“Alas! I thought, poor girl, she was dead and buried; for I have long had something in my bosom which told me so. I'm glad she never knew the griefs which I have known.”

Wilson then, to divert him, said, if he intended making visits that morning, he ought to have his hair dressed.

Looking wildly upon him, he exclaimed—"My hair dressed!—Why, whom have I to please?—The world now is all darkness to me; for the sun is set which used to shine on me."—(Then taking my hand)—"Is this my Emmeline's hand?—I have loved you, my sweet girl, with all the sincerity of which an ardent and youthful heart is capable: but you must not weep; for tears, which fall lightly from your eyes, lie heavily here"—(laying his hand on his bosom). "But the worst will soon be over.—Is the chaise ready, sister?"

At that instant Mr. Falkner drove up, who was much better, and had called several times; but as he still continued weak, it was judged most proper that he should not see Mr. Courtland.

"Good God!" wringing his hands, "here is Falkner"—(tears running down his face).—"But why was he so impatient?—Well, no matter; it will all be soon over."—(Then catching me in his arms as Mr. Falkner entered)—"Can you leave me for ever, Emmeline?"

"I will

“ I will answer with my life,” said his father, “ Emmeline will never quit you, provided you exert yourself, and do not give way to this weakness which has lately taken possession of you.”

As Mr. Falkner advanced, I found his tremors encrease.—Mr. Courtland then took his hand, saying, “ Falkner, I had but one earthly treasure to make the journey of life pleasant to me—my Emmeline. I have long suspected your attachment to her ; and your late illness, so suddenly following the declaration I made you of our mutual attachment, convinced me of it. I silently vowed to the God of Heaven that she should be your’s, should life be granted you ; and here I fulfil my vow”—attempting to take my hand, which he wanted strength to hold, for he was quite exhausted : again he fainted away.

Judge, Madam, of the astonishment with which every one present was filled.

As soon as he recovered his reason, Mr. Falkner took my hand, and laid it in Mr. Courtland’s, saying, “ Thus let me restore again to you the treasure of your soul. We have strangely misapprehended each other. Your charming sister, Courtland, is the only treasure I would

would wish to receive from your hands; for which I have already your father's sanction, together with the concurrence of her own heart."

"What says my Harry?" interrupted the General—"Will you admit Mr. Falkner as a brother, that love and harmony may reign once more amongst us?"

A ray of satisfaction beamed over his face. "Most gladly," cried he. "But either teach me how to temporize with my feelings, or leave me to the indulgence of them; for I am very weak, and happiness is so new to me—My sweet Emmeline, your hand."

His father presented it to him, saying, "Take it, my son; and if life be continued to you, let it be your principal study how you can best deserve it.—But we will all retire, and leave her to hush the agitation of your spirits, that you may be enabled, some time hence, to receive us with more satisfaction."—They then withdrew.

What an awkward situation was mine! Yet I exerted every tender care for the recovery of my patient; who had the goodness to tell me, it would be more efficacious towards his recovery than all the

the medicines which could be prescribed for him.

What has he not suffered for my sake? Can I be too attentive—too grateful—for all his goodness to me?—Though his heart, he assures me, is perfectly at ease, yet he mends but slowly; such ravages has the fever made in his constitution.—Adieu.

E. ACKWORTH.

LETTER XLII.

H. Courtland, *Esq.*; to G. Montrose, *Esq.*

Roselands.

“ As Love alone can exquisitely bless,
“ Love only feels the marvellous of pain,
“ Opens new veins of torture in the soul,
“ And wakes the nerve where agonies are born.”

STRANGE this, Montrose, that the soul and body, which are formed of such opposite materials, should act so strictly in conjunction with each other; for when Reason deserts her post, the body

body instantly takes up the cause, and, both uniting, make such a havock with the man, that Death stands aloof, waiting the word of command, when Life snaps the thread of mortality, to catch him in his jaws. But my Emmeline's tenderness has this once disappointed the monster of his expected morsel.

So I find my father has told you all how and about it. I am afraid my conduct, if properly stated, does not make a very gallant figure on paper.

What a blessed mistake did I make respecting the object of Falkner's passion—my fly sister!—Who could have suspected it?—Why, yes; I find every body suspected it but your jealous-pated friend. But it is my fate always to be diverging from the line of prudence and common sense, to launch into heroics.

When I found Falkner, as I thought, dying, I asked him, if love were not the cause of his suffering?—He answered in the affirmative.—I solemnly vowed to grant him the object of his wishes; for I concluded that every man who saw my Emmeline, must see her with my eyes. He thanked me, saying, I had given him new life, after the hell of torments I had made him suffer. But, concluding

ing that we understood each other, he never hinted his disorder was occasioned by my informing him of the match which I concluded was going on between Clarkson and my sister, and that that gentleman, on soliciting my consent to pay his addresses to her, had obtained it.

My sister tells me, no language can paint my Emmeline's affliction during my illness. Indeed her countenance still wears strong indications of it; but now I begin a little to recover my spirits, she grows very shy of her attentions, which I covet more than ever. I have complained of it to her. I have also complained to my father; and then I fare the better for it for some days after. And now she has taken it into her head to complain, and says, I am never satisfied.

"The sooner then, my dear," added he, "you appoint the day of trial which I proposed to you at Courtland Manor, the more it will redound to your advantage; for we must never think of trusting our Courtland into the world again without a guide, since he knows so little how to conduct himself.—I love your virtues, my Harry; but I wish to subdue your faults. You are generous in your nature, and always open to conviction.

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vi^ction. Pride sets the human mind above its Maker; but an humble spirit shews its entire dependance on its dispensations.—You are not avaricious neither; for avarice is the lowest vice of man: and he who is puffed up with the arrogance of riches, floats in his own dross, which the canker of time gradually moulders away, and then he sinks again into that nothingness from whence he first arose.”

He was proceeding, when we were interrupted by the arrival of the Darnley family. Lady Augusta—so full of concern for my illness—so tender—so compassionate—and so—so—so—
Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XLIII.

To the Same.

“ There is a tide in the affairs of men,
“ Which, taken at the flood, leads on to Fortune ;
“ Omitted, all the voyage of their lives
“ Is bound in shallows and in miseries.”

SHAKESPEARE.

“ **W**HAT, poetry again ?” — Yes, faith ; for, by taking the tide at the flood, I hope soon to get safe into port.

The long-expected day of trial at length came. The two preceding ones my sister had spent with Mrs. Patterson. My sweet love had not courage to venture down to breakfast. I admired her delicacy, though it deprived me of her company. My father had unavoidable business abroad, which detained him till we met at dinner. Emmeline was not come down.

“ I’m afraid,” said my father, putting a note into my hand just received from her, “ that we shall not be able to bring our cause to a hearing ; for Emmeline here declines her suit ; begs to withdraw herself, and to throw her cause on the mercy of her judges. But read.”

The

The note was as follows :

“ Dearest Sir,
 “ WHEN characters most distinguished for their integrity appear at the awful bar of Justice, however conscious of their innocence, yet the mind must feel itself subdued by such a solemnity.—How then, dear Sir, can I appear, knowing my guilt?—for I have taken counsel of my heart, and that condemns me.—If then, Sir, there be any merit in the confession of a fault, I own myself criminal; and can only plead in my justification the strong temptation I had to draw me from my duty.

“ Yet all the mercy I ask is, that you will dispense with my appearance on the trial.—Be you, dearest Sir, my advocate and judge; for I am well aware that my adversary is furnished with all that seductive eloquence which can “ make the worse appear the better reason.”—And believe me, Sir, you shall never have cause to repent your indulgence to your dutifully affectionate

E. ACKWORTH.”

When I had read this extraordinary request, I begged to know what reply had been made to it.

“ Why,”

“ Why,” returned he, “ I wrote to her that a matter of so much importance could not be properly adjusted without her appearance in court.”

At that instant I heard her footsteps, and hastened to the door to lead her in, covered with blushing confusion—her sweet eyes fixed on the floor; and though I conducted her to her seat at table, I could venture to swear she never saw me. She took up her knife and fork, which dropt from her nerveless hand as she attempted to carve; and then she took them up again; and again she attempted, but with as little success as before. The servant handed her bread—she returned him her plate—and then asked him why he did not bring in the second course.

“ Don’t be in a hurry, my love,” said my father; “ we have not tasted of the first yet.”

“ Bless me, Sir,” returned she, “ I am vastly stupid to-day.”

She then made another attempt towards carving some chickens. But seeing she was not likely to succeed better, I said, with permission, I would take the trouble off her hands; though I would not promise to acquit myself with that skill which she had done on former occasions.

As

As I found her emotions rather encrease than subside, I was pained that the servants should be spectators of a scene, wherein the beloved of my heart was so principal a performer: I therefore nodded to them to withdraw. But my father calling for a glass of wine, entreated Emmeline to drink one with him. She neither refused nor accepted his offer; upon which he said, "I'm sorry, my dear, you came to dinner in complaisance to me; for I see you have no appetite. Perhaps you had rather retire to the drawing-room; and we will drink our coffee with you."

"If I might be indulged, Sir," returned she, in a voice scarcely audible, "I should be much obliged——"

"But, my love, take one glass of wine first," said he; "it will raise your spirits."

Unluckily he could not have hit upon a means which could have discomposed them more; for, attempting to raise it to her lips, her hand trembled so violently that she threw it all about. I called for another; which I put to her lips; and when she had drank it, I led her to the drawing-room, entreating her, for my sake, to fortify her mind—that, when my father presented to me the prize

of love, I should not see, on her side, it was granted with reluctance ; and added, if it would enable her to look on me with more composure, I could with truth declare, that I was ready the next hour to resign all my once-boasted liberty for those sweets of slavery which I hoped to enjoy in gentle bondage with her. Kissing her hand, I returned to table ; but faith, George, had little more relish for the pleasures of it than my angel. Yet we men, you know, are obliged to affect a bravery, however much our feelings may be concerned.— I carried it off tolerably well.

After sitting about an hour, which to me seemed an eternity, my father ordered coffee to the drawing-room ; and asked me if I would not attend ?

“ Most willingly, Sir,” rising.

Now, George, don’t you feel for me ?

My father took his seat on the sofa, next Emmeline. I stood leaning on the back of a chair opposite.

He then, lawyer like, proceeded to open the cause. “ As you have already, my dearest Emmeline,” taking her hand, “ acknowledged yourself guilty, you must only wait till the sentence of the court be pronounced.”—She bowed.—“ And now,

now, Courtland, stand forward on your defence."

" It will be very short, Sir ; and not drawn out into a tedious length by any quirks and quibbles of the law. Truth and Nature are my counsel ; and under their auspices I plead.

" From the time, Sir, that this dear girl was three years old, I may date the commencement of a passion which has been almost hourly encreasing upon me through life ; except those I spent abroad, which I never call to mind but with the most extreme regret. My spirits, unbroken by disappointment, gaily embraced every folly which pleasure had to offer.—On returning, Sir, to you and virtue, my principles recovered new vigour ; and I soon learnt that there were pleasures more refined—more rational—to be found in virtuous society, than I had ever yet enjoyed.—When you first presented my sweet Emmeline to me, you bade me love her as a sister. There my feelings revolted. I did love her agreeably to your request ; but I found the affection very distinct from that I had for my sister Sophy ; and all my study was, how to change the relationship into a nearer and tenderer name. As soon as I thought

I thought I was master of her sentiments, I made her an offering of my heart; which she cruelly declined accepting, and at the same time laid such an embargo on my silence to you as threatened me with her eternal displeasure, if I dared to break it.—But, alas! how weak is man, when woman guides his fate!—From that time I became careless of my conduct, hoping that you, Sir, would discover what I durst not reveal.—And now, if my fair accuser has other crimes to lay to my charge, I stand here to answer them.”

“ What says my girl?” interrupted my father.

“ I have nothing to say,” replied she. “ I have already confessed my guilt, and thrown myself on the mercy of my judges. Yet, could this confession make me appear less culpable, from you, Sir,” (to my father) “ I should hope my sentence might be executed with less rigour.

“ When I first began to discover Mr. Courtland’s attachment to me, I sought every means which prudence could suggest to divert his thoughts into another channel; ‘ for,’ said I to myself, ‘ shall I, an orphan, without either friends or fortune—shall I make no other return to

my noble benefactor than suffering his only son—the pride of his hopes—to indulge a passion unworthy of him, and encourage him to act in open disobedience to the will of such a father?—No! let the world forsake me, rather than I should do an action which would render me unworthy of its esteem.”

She could not proceed; the tears ran down her cheeks; which my father wiped away.—Wou’d I could have availed myself of such an indulgence! But prudence suggested to me that I had better keep my distance a little longer.

“ And now, my children,” said my father, “ I have heard the cause on both sides, I must beg your indulgence to grant me a hearing likewise.

“ It is many years, my son, since I pleased myself with the idea of seeing a mutual affection take place between you and my Emmeline; for, early in life, you gave a rich promise of being one day that which time has at length matured. Though the irregularity of your conduct for a long time baffled all my expectations, and your attachment to women, without distinction of character, was a constant source of chagrin to me, ‘ my virtuous Emmeline,’ said I, ‘ shall never fall a victim to the licentious profligacy

fligacy of my son.'—I acquainted your friend Montrose, who was in all my secrets, with my intentions; and, by your letters to him, I regulated my own conduct. Forgive this breach of confidence, in consideration of the good which resulted from it.—He pleaded hard for you, Courtland; still venturing to pronounce you had not a vicious heart, and hinting, that if I could find a means to snatch you from the vortex of folly in which you were floating in France, that a time would come when, he would answer with his life, you would become the very character my ardent wishes had formed of you.

" When you returned to England, I gave up every idea that your reformation would ever be effected. I then dreaded the moment, above all others, which must necessarily introduce you to my Emmeline, lest her tender unsuspecting heart should be touched by your personal graces, which I had heard so highly spoken of, without being able to interest your heart.—I introduced you then to her in the character of a brother—a character so sacred, that, in a mind not totally vitiated, I thought would check all the irregular impulses of your heart, should any arise respecting her.

“ I soon saw the progress which the simplicity of her manners had made upon you ; and that, whilst *her* good sense curbed *your* levity, she found the art of chastening and rivetting your affections. — Had your attachment been solely to her person, I should have indulged small hopes of its duration. But when I found the qualities of her mind had taken hold on your judgment, then I ardently wished that the prepossession might be mutual. With infinite satisfaction I beheld this new passion operating on my Emmeline’s mind. I saw she wished to esteem the man whose engaging manners had touched her heart. She was ignorant of its situation, and too ingenuous for disguise. In the midst of her perplexities, how often have your sister and I wished to extricate her! (for she and Mrs. Aylbert were both concerned in my plot upon you.) But still I thought it was better to remain a spectator, than an actor, in our little drama, at least for a time. — Your dutiful attention to me, Courtland, and your affectionate regard for your sister, were the surest testimonies I could receive that you were sincere in your reformation ; for the bosom devoted to its own indulgences, is too narrow to contain the parental and fraternal affections.

“ I have

"I have now waited, my dear children, with an impatience nearly equal to your own, to bring matters to a proper elucidation.

"I will only further add one hint for you to remember—that whatever is mortal, is uncertain; and should trials meet you in your progress through life, be assured, my children, that the supports of religion can best qualify you to bear them; and that alone will enable you to appear with humble confidence at the last great day of trial, where the Searcher of all hearts will sit himself as judge."

A pause took place for some time.—
He then proceeded.

Taking my Emmeline's hand, and laying it in mine, "Receive from my hand, my Courtland, the dearest pledge of affection which it will ever be in my power to make you; and may the God of Heaven long preserve you a blessing to each other!"

I received the dear deposit on my knee;
and as I pressed it to my lips it was moist-
ened with a tear, the tender testimony
which nature lends her children when she
denies them language.

Here another silence ensued; for it was some time before I found my voice strong

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enough to support the weight of my feelings. At length I did stammer out something to this purpose—That I feared I had only a divided heart to offer my angel; but assuring her at the same time that she only shared it with my father.—Then turning to him, I asked him to tell me by what means I could in some measure discharge the weight of such obligations?

“ By making the best of husbands to my Emmeline,” said he, again pressing our hands; “ who, I am afraid, will find full exercise for her patience, if every time, Harry, you make a present of your wife to all your male friends who shall look upon her with the eyes of love.”

“ There is no fear of that now, Sir; for the last exploit of the kind has cost me too dear. Every day will render me more and more covetous of my treasure; and, so far from giving it away, I even now shudder at the thought that other eyes than my own should ever behold it.”

My father then folded us both to his bosom, saying, “ My sweet Emmeline, you have been long the child of my adoption: from this moment you have a nearer and tenderer claim to my affections; and may Heaven long preserve you

you a blessing to each other," again embracing us. To which my heart gave an assenting *Amen.*

" If Providence," continued he, " had not carefully concealed from us the miseries of life, despondency would slacken our pursuits and pervade all present enjoyments. Early in life I was marked out to suffer. The world pressed hard on my misfortunes; but religion upheld me in the conflict. The wretched have few claims upon the world; in the midst of it I seemed to live in solitude; for I possessed not the means to court the smiles of the prosperous. I had only a lieutenant's pay—and two helpless babes to support.—May my example teach you fortitude, my children, should the hour of affliction ever overtake you;—despondency suits not the Christian; for whoever has been long familiar with disappointment, is prepared for the fallacy of human enjoyments. Heaven often grants us the accomplishment of our wishes, but does not promise for their duration.—When I married your mother, my Courtland, my happiness was as perfect as the lot of humanity could make it: she was in the bloom of youth and the pride of health; yet the stroke of death came suddenly upon her—

snatched her from my bleeding heart, and left me surrounded by all the ravages of war—with my two helpless babes.—Just before she expired, she hung this picture round my neck,” (seeking it out) “ which has been the solitary companion of my bosom for more than twenty years. ‘ Keep this, my beloved Harry,’ said she, ‘ as a tender memorial of the brevity of all human enjoyments. Shew it our children, should they ever think of entering the married state, that they may see life has nothing certain in it but misery. And, O tell them they will find the bed of sickness has its torments, without the aggravation of a guilty conscience.—Though my body is weakened by the icy hand of death, the feelings of a wife and mother still cling about my heart.—Tell them also, my dearest love, that a life of virtue is the best comforter on a dying bed, and that my last prayer to Heaven was to petition blessings for them.’ Then throwing her languid eyes upon me, with a gentle sigh, the purest spirit ever embodied by human clay fled to its native skies.”

Then returning the picture of my once beautiful mother to his bosom, he walked the room in great emotion; whilst I supported

ported my sweet Emmeline, almost drowned in tears.

“ Pardon me, dearest children,” again returning to us; “ I meant not to distress you; but I thought myself bound to fulfil a promise made to my dying wife. You will naturally conclude, that on her death I gave myself up to unavailing sorrow. I did: it is difficult to conquer grief in its first stages. The world still had claims upon me. I had the duties of a soldier and a parent to fulfil. The thought was agonizing; for, should a ball from the enemy mark me for destruction, who was there to supply my place with my children?—Every morning at the beat of drum, when I folded you to my heart, I felt as if I were taking a last embrace; when the hand of Providence, my Emmeline, sent your father to me, and snatched my darlings from distress. You know what followed. Your tender mother, Emmeline, became a mother to my babes also; careffed them with maternal fondness, and saved their father from ever feeling more the cruel pangs of hunger; for I was too proud to breathe my distresses to vulgar ears.”

I scarcely know, George, what I said or what I did. I feared I should not have preserved my Emmeline from faint-

ing, so entirely was her gentle nature subdued by this pathetic story. As soon as the perturbation of my mind was a little subsided, I ventured to ask my father when he would give me leave to assume my new character of a husband?

“ You must well study the part first,” said he, smiling; “ for there will be a little demur, which I once mentioned to your Emmeline, respecting a young gentleman for whom her father had the greatest esteem when a boy. He wished I would, at a proper time, introduce his girl to him; and if I discovered any thing like a mutual attachment between them, begged I might see them united. But my Emmeline’s inclinations were never to be embarrassed with the fetters of restraint. I think you have nothing to fear on her side; and I believe there is as little to fear on the gentleman’s; for, by the last accounts I had of him, he was on the point of being married. We have therefore only to wait the event.”

What a cruel blow was this to the ardour of my impatience!—I remonstrated.

“ Why,” said he, “ to look back, the time seems nothing; and to look forward, you will find it always advancing

—it

—it is nothing to him whose bosom is at ease.—Besides, you have been such an idle fellow, Courtland, in your affairs, that you have many arrangements to make before you ought to think of encumbering yourself with a wife:—you have no house—no servants—no—”

“ As to a house, Sir, till my own is ready, you know that is a difficulty which money easily gets over; and as to servants, why, I don’t think I shall allow her any; for I shall be so jealous of every mortal being who pays her the least attention, that I shall attend all her commands myself.”

He smiled, and said, he would leave us to ourselves to discuss so material a point; and in the meantime would drink tea at Dr. Patterson’s. So saying, he withdrew, and left me at full liberty to renew those vows which the charmer of my heart had so repeatedly rejected, and to which she, with blushing modesty, now lent an attentive ear.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XLIV.

Sir William Falkner to Henry Courtland, Esq.

Wellburn.

ISEND you, dear Courtland, the promised narrative of my chequered life, humbly hoping, if deep repentance can make atonement for the imprudences of youth, it will find acceptance at the fountain of mercy.

My father was a baronet, and descended from a very ancient family in the north of Scotland. My mother derived her birth from a noble English family. I was the only fruit of their nuptials; and it became the principal pleasure of their lives to form my mind to the love of virtue. But, alas! I lost them both at a time when I stood most in need of their counsel and support.

At the age of eighteen I became master of myself and a very competent fortune. My two guardians did not long survive my parents. I had no one now to control my inclinations, and my passions usurped entire dominion over my reason. Unluckily for me, my uncle and aunt Patterson were

were gone to Lisbon for the recovery of their son's health, who is since dead.

My situation procured me many friends; but I was too young to discriminate characters. My acquaintance was sought by a set of needy young men, who, by flattering my vanity, naturally weakened my love for virtue.

There was a young man of the name of Macshannon, an Irishman by birth, with whom I had contracted an intimacy at school. His person was handsome, his manners pleasing, and his language so insinuating, that, like Belial, he had the art of clothing vice with all the seductive powers of eloquence. He was by several years my senior; and was so perfect a master of dissimulation, that I never suspected the evils he meditated against me, till I found myself crushed with their weight.

Within six months of my father's death, I formed a plan of finishing my studies at Oxford. I had long acquainted Macshannon of my design, who said, he had been some time entered at the Temple, and must be in London at the opening of the next term. We proposed setting off together.

His genius was fertile in planning new schemes of pleasure. When we got to

to town he very much weakened my intention of prosecuting my studies at Oxford; and in a few months it was totally forgotten.

We seemed at length so necessary to each other's happiness, that in short we were to have but one purse between us. He had taught me to believe, that, tho' his fortune was then limited, it would be very ample after the death of his uncle; and then he would make up to me every trespass he made upon mine.—But my notions of friendship were then too romantic—too disinterested—to demand an acknowledgment for any pecuniary advantages he should ever receive from me; which would indeed have been to no effect; for he was never worth a groat.

Well, after participating in every pleasure that money could procure, for more than two years, we thought of changing the scene, and went over to the continent. In Paris, fresh scenes dazzled my senses; and my cheated fancy thought the present day always happier than the former.—My steward made great remonstrances with me, saying, the principal of my fortune could not much longer supply my extravagancies.—I began at length to be heartily weary of the life I led. I lost my

my spirits—I purposed to Macshannon to return to Scotland to settle my affairs—I had a great abhorrence of debt. He said, he had a remedy against every contingency of that sort; that he was always successful at the gaming-table; and at the last extremity we could risque our fortunes there. I ever abhorred the vice; and without skill there could be no chance of success.

The approach of the carnival drew us into Italy. I received pleasure amongst the fair Neapolitans beyond what I had ever experienced at the French court.—My mind, by nature formed for virtuous society, began at length to sicken at the constant round of dissipation in which I lived: the prattle of courtezans, or the rattle of a dice-box, at length became equally disgusting to me. Though Macshannon played high, yet my purse was always to answer his demands.

Disgust at length followed me in every pursuit. I longed for domestic society; and determined to return home; to which Macshannon seemingly consented, whilst he was laying fresh plans to detain me. My letters of credit were outrun; and debts came pouring in upon me on all sides. With all the rage of despair, I then took to play; and Macshannon introduced

troduced the bottle, as a sure succedaneum. Thus was one act of intemperance obliterated by another.

In this great dilemma, I received an unexpected supply of money from my steward. After carefully locking it up in my bureau, Macshannon and I went to pursue our different amusements for the evening—he to the gaming-table, and I to a ball.—On quitting it, I found myself a prisoner; and soon after had the mortification to find myself lodged in a common gaol, without being informed of the nature of my crime. I sent a messenger to my lodgings to advise Macshannon of my detention, and begging him to come to me immediately. But judge how my mortifications were increased, to find that he, with a Mr. Durand, who had been of all our parties, and a gambler by profession, had stripped my lodgings of every thing!

What a torrent of reflection now poured in upon my mind. The horrors of want stared me in the face, whilst remorse of conscience goaded my heart. I was *too* proud to make my distresses known to some young men of fashion of my own country; and therefore determined to die, rather than suffer the eye of compassion to gaze on miseries which

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the intemperance of folly had brought upon me.—O! my friend, how agonizing is the day of trial, which leaves us without the tender consolations of friendship.

After a week's confinement, a note was delivered me by the keeper of the prison, containing these words:

“ Your longer confinement will answer no purpose. If the qualms of conscience will be any consolation to you for the ruin of your fortune, be assured they shall never be interrupted by the impertinent intrusion of your humble servant,

MACSHANNON.”

My senses were so stunned by such extraordinary intelligence, that I was scarcely sensible of my liberty till I found myself in the street, absolutely sinking with abstinence and fatigue.— My full dress, for I had no other, drew upon me the sneer of contempt from every passenger. I walked on without knowing whither I went, till I reached the port; where I fell at length, quite exhausted, on some goods ready for embarkation.

I was soon after accosted by an English sailor, whose coarse language now sounded like

like music in my ears. “ How now, master ! ” cried he—“ Ecod, if it were not for your fool’s coat, a body might think you were come to get a birth on board ship.”

He was much surprised when I answered him in English, telling him, I would gladly exchange my fool’s coat for the very worst jacket and trowsers he had in possession.

He was ready to clasp me in his arms, on finding I was his countryman ; crying, “ Why, zounds ! master, ye must be in bad plight then.”—(I burst into tears)—“ Nay, never cry, man,” rejoined he ; “ for if these here outlandish folks should see rain in an Englishman’s eyes, they would say, his heart would never be tough enough to stand Monseer’s fire.—Why, I never whimpered but once in my born days, and that was when I was pressed, and left my poor old mother without a morsel of bread.”

In a few words, I told him as much of my situation as I thought necessary ; and added, I would reward him handsomely on my return to England, if he could prevail on his captain to carry me thither.

“ Then cheer up, my lad,” clapping me on the shoulder ; “ for if the captain

tain refuses to take you, I'll promise to work your passage home. As long as honest George Walden can pull a rope, he'll never leave an Englishman to starve on pickled-herrings in a popish country."

He then led me to his captain. My appearance so greatly belying my circumstances, he treated me with the profoundest respect; till he found I could not defray the expences of my passage before we arrived in England. He now began to hesitate, and thought his ship was too crowded already.

"No such thing—no such thing, captain," cried honest George. "If there be room enough for a rich man, certainly much less will do for a poor one; for poverty lies still and snug, but riches must have a deal of sea-room to bustle in. But, by the Lord Harry, captain, if so be ye doubt the gentleman's word about payment, I'll give you a bit of paper, not to touch a doit of my wages till you have paid yourself. Why, Lord love you, captain, if we won't do a little for one another, how can we expect that God Almighty can do for us all?"

Powerful as these arguments were, they would certainly have failed, if I had not backed them with a draft at sight on my banker in London.

I was

I was at length received on board ; and the first satisfaction I had felt for a long time, was to exchange my fool's coat for a coloured shirt and tattered jacket. As I surveyed myself, I felt less humbled at my present appearance than for the motives which reduced me to it. I saw my companions laborious, cheerful, and contented : the wants of nature were supplied ; for those could not sigh after the luxuries of life who had never known the indulgence of them.

We had a prosperous voyage, and landed safely in Bristol. As I was crossing the quay with my friend George, in pursuit of a lodging, who should Providence throw in my way but my uncle Patterson ! to whom I had written the miserable state of my affairs before they were brought to a crisis, and of my fixed intention of returning home.

I caught him in my arms—I called him by his name—He knew my voice, though he seemed to doubt the evidence of his ienses.

“ Speak—tell me,” cried he, “ can you be Sir William Falkner ?”

“ It is, it is,” exclaimed I ; “ but so humbled by my misfortunes, that I own myself unworthy your esteem.”

Honest

Honest George, overcome with the idea of my good fortune, struck up a hornpipe ; and the extravagance of his joy was nearly raising a mob about us.

I attended my uncle to his inn, who, I perceived, dropped tears of tender concern at my misfortunes as we walked along. I ordered George to supply himself with grog ; and when I wanted his further assistance, I promised to call for him.

I was no sooner alone with my uncle, than I fell on my knees, to beg pardon for the involuntary embrace I had given him in the street. He kindly raised me, saying, if my penitence were sincere, he should ever look upon our meeting as the kind interposition of Providence.—The mild benevolence of his words at length began to raise me into some degree of importance with myself ; and I entreated him to protect a young man, whose imprudences, I flattered myself, had taught him wisdom.

He tenderly embraced me, saying, as long as my conduct deserved the approbation of good men, he would look upon me in the light of a son.

You will do me the justice, my dear Courtland, to believe that I expressed myself grateful for the adoption.

On

On acquainting the worthy George with my good fortune, his transports fell very little short of my own. He returned with me to the ship; where I paid off the captain, and gave ten guineas amongst the sailors, as a feeble acknowledgment of their friendship to me. As to George, I settled a little annuity upon him: he quitted the sea, being old; and is now laid up in a safe harbour, spending the last remnants of a laborious life, in giving comforts to his aged mother.

As soon as I got properly equipped, we set out for Wellburn. My ever-indulgent aunt received the prodigal with maternal tenderness.—I dropped at once the title of my ancestors; and we agreed that I should pass for an indigent relation, entirely dependant on their bounty. This precaution put all stop to further enquiry about me.

Dr. Patterson went to London immediately, to settle accounts with my banker. I had given him the power to act as my agent, intending to keep my return to England a profound secret.—His journey was productive of very little consolation to me; for Macshannon, having forged my name, had sold out all

all the money I had in the funds, and made his escape with it.

I felt less shocked at it than might be imagined; so happy was I to have escaped from the clutches of such a villain without loss of honour as well as fortune: and I made a vow to confine my expences to one hundred pounds a-year, till my estate was cleared of all encumbrances.—I seldom went from home, carefully avoiding all societies where I thought it probable I might be discovered—books, music, and painting, engaging my whole time.

I had been five years at Wellburn, when your father purchased Roselands. My first introduction to him I felt as if it would be productive of future good to me. As he was quite a stranger in the country, my little offers of friendship met with a most grateful return. I felt a pleasure in being distinguished by a man whom every body seemed to behold with reverence. He seldom staid long at Roselands, till his family was settled there; and in his absence I superintended his works; and whatever I planned, had the honour to meet with his approbation.

In laying out his garden, I never once formed to myself the idea that it would prove

prove a future Paradise to me, wherein I should lop the luxuriant branches of the overgrown shrubs and plants, with my beauteous Eve attending by my side. — Your father had talked of his girls in general terms ; but said nothing of them which could either raise hope or excite curiosity. At length the day arrived, which painted to me my past unfortunate conduct in its most aggravating light—the day which first brought your dear sister to Roselands. She filled up every idea I had formed of female perfection ; and whilst I gazed on her with eyes of admiration, my heart felt all the tender anxieties of love.

When the General politely presented us to each other, he said, “ Mr. Falkner, I have brought you my girl. Whilst she is cultivating your friendship, I hope you will inspire her with that taste for the fine arts which you possess in so eminent a degree. And I trust, my love,” (addressing himself to her) “ in return for those advantages you will derive” (he was pleased to add) “ from Mr. Falkner’s conversation, you will endeavour to accommodate every thing in this house to his convenience.”

She curtseyed ; and, with a modest confusion, said, she hoped she should never be

be guilty of any breach of hospitality towards his friends ; for whoever he chose to distinguish, it should be her aim to endeavour to please.

From that time, I had free access to the family ; and every hour's conversation with my beloved Sophia, whilst it served to unite me more closely to her, made me feel myself the more a beggar. Unpractised in those female arts which are acquired by a commerce with the world, she was too artless to conceal from my tender impatience, that her bosom felt a corresponding flame with my own. A soft blush tinged her cheek whenever I appeared ; which was over-spread by a delicate languor when I left her.

As my shattered circumstances would not permit me to make proposals to the General, I shuddered at the horrors of my situation. I had inevitably gained the affections of one of the most amiable of her sex ; and though I loved her with a passion which has few examples, yet, situated as I was, honour would not suffer me to disclose the secret of my heart. My spirits became oppressed—I grew melancholy. I denied myself the only satisfaction life could afford me—that of seeing my beloved Sophia. I ceased to

visit at Roselands. My existence became a burthen to me. In vain my good aunt and uncle entreated to learn the cause of my sorrow: I was silent—or answered them only by my sighs.

The General came to visit me, with his charming daughter; and said, “If you are too ill to visit us, Falkner, my girl and I cannot refuse ourselves the satisfaction of visiting you.”

What a painful pleasure did those words communicate to my feelings!—My sweet Sophia looked pale and dejected. A walk was proposed in the garden: I took her hand, and led her to the little arbour wherein I lately discovered you. We sat down—I pressed her hand to my heart—I sighed—I could not speak. She saw my agitation—Tears silently stole down her cheeks. Again I pressed her hand—again attempted to speak. Love and honour were at war in my bosom. Love prompted me to disclose to my Sophia all that the tenderest passion could dictate; whilst Honour told me I was not worthy of her. I left her with the utmost precipitation, and hurried to my apartment, telling my aunt to attend Miss Courtland, for I found myself unable to continue my walk.

I gave

I gave a loose to the bitterest sorrow ; and nothing could have reconciled me to myself but the reflection, that I had concealed the sentiments of my heart at a moment when it would have been a dishonour to my character to have disclosed them.

The General was unceasing in his inquiries after my health. "But I fear, young gentleman," said he to me one day when we were alone, "your disorder is seated in the mind."

"Too truly guessed, my dearest Sir," said I, in an agony not to be expressed. "I have imposed myself upon you for what I am not. You have honoured me with your esteem, because you think me a man of principle and honour. I am neither, Sir. I am one of the worst of the sons of men. My life has been a continued series of folly and extravagance ; and that I have cheated you of your esteem, by a counterfeit hypocrisy of virtues which I never practised, is my torment. But justice now has drawn aside the veil, and bids me tell you to look upon me as a man unworthy of your friendship ; though, to part with it, I give up all my hopes in life."

He appeared extremely agitated ; and said, there was, however, so much candour

in the confession, that he should not withdraw his friendship till I had given him stronger proofs of my disaffection from virtue than he had yet received.

I then made him as brief a narrative of my past life as my memory could furnish me with. When I had done, he kindly said, my candour had fixed him more my friend than ever.

“ I have seen, my dear Sir William,” said he—I stopped him, and begged he would never again address me by that title, till I could support it with proper credit.

He said, all that had passed between us should for ever lie buried in his bosom. Then continued—“ I have had too much commerce with mankind to be unacquainted with the arts of seduction which bad men make use of to draw young men of fashion and fortune from the paths of virtue.—I have an only son, Sir, at this instant exposed to every seduction which pleasure has to offer. His bosom, made callous by her blandishments, will never receive the soft impression of parental love. But should the tender impulses of nature ever touch his feelings, and restore him to my ardent prayers, I would not censure his frailties—No, Sir, I would endeavour only

only to shew him the beauty of virtue. If his reformation were sincere, he would gladly embrace her ; if not, I had acquitted myself of the duty of a parent and a Christian.—I have long, my dear Sir, beheld the struggles of your mind. The generous confession you have made me of your past life, whilst it entitles you to my compassion, hath also procured for you my entire esteem. In future, let me entreat you to look upon me as your friend and counsellor : and if my fortune can extricate you from any difficulties, you may command it, for every child of sorrow I look upon as a brother ; and assure yourself, my house will be always open to you.”

In this manner did this best of men console me for the sad events of my past life. I felt my spirits freed from an oppressive weight. I renewed again my visits at Roselands, with a degree of satisfaction I had never known before.

Miss Ackworth now added one to our little community ; she having spent the last six months with her excellent friend Mrs. Aylbert, to console her for the loss of an only daughter.

The friendship betwixt her and my beloved Sophia was of that chaste and

M 3 delicate

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delicate nature which can only be felt by superior minds.

What inward satisfaction did I feel in hourly beholding the improvement your sister was making in person and mind. As a mistress, she was mild—gentle—humane: as a friend, she was open—frank—sincere. All the world loved her—but I adored her.—Under such circumstances, you will easily judge the violence I did my feelings, to keep my passion for this charming girl a secret from her.

Such was our situation, when you, Sir, was first introduced to us. I dreaded your sagacity would penetrate a secret I was so studious to conceal. But I was soon agreeably undeceived; and, so far from suspecting my attachment to your sister, I had reason to believe that you thought I rivalled you in the affections of your Emmeline: and the freezing indifference with which you met my offered friendship, convinced me that I was right in my conjectures. I told your father of my suspicions; and said, I thought it most advisable for a while to withdraw my visits from Roselands.

So far from it, he said, he wished, with convenience to myself, I could make them more

more frequent; that it was with pleasure he saw his son falling into the very snare he had been so long spreading for him. "Therefore, my dear Falkner," added he, "let me entreat you to continue your attentions to my Emmeline. You are of a calm temper, and will not easily kindle with resentment should my impetuous boy sometimes forget the respect due to your character, whilst he looks upon you in the light of a rival. He wants not generosity, when convinced of his error: but 'tis with pleasure I see he looks upon every man as an enemy who glances an eye towards his Emmeline."

Thus having settled our plan of operations, I continued to behave as I had always done.

Your jealous fears of me, procured me the happiest moments of my life, for, by securing your Emmeline to yourself, I was left to the perfect enjoyment of your charming sister's conversation. We seemed perfectly to understand each other, though I resolved not to propose myself to her for some months, when I hoped my affairs would be so arranged, that I might, without a blush, ask her of her father.

M 4

Thus,

Thus, my dear Courtland, did I cherish in silence a passion for some years. But what a cruel stab did you give to all my fond expectations, when you informed me of your sister's intended marriage with Mr. Clarkson!—No wonder it should rob me of reason.—In my lucid intervals, I entreated my dear uncle and aunt never to disclose the cause of my death. When you visited me in my affliction, and promised, if I survived, to grant me the object of my fondest hopes, how could I guess that it was your Emmeline you would sacrifice to indulge them?—I concluded it was my beloved Sophia; and my soul revived at the thought. My uncle sent off an express to your father, giving him a circumstantial account of my situation, and telling him my death was inevitable, if robbed of my adored Sophia. He returned with the utmost expedition, and led his weeping daughter to me, saying, “ My dear Falkner, I hope I bring you a cordial which will prove more effectual to your disorder than the prescriptions of your physician. If my Sophy,” laying her hand in mine, “ is dear to you, I can with truth assure you that you are not less so to her. Live, my friend, to reward

reward a tenderness that does honour to human nature."

I know not what reply I made to so much goodness. I can only add, dear as the blessing was to my soul, exhausted nature denied me the power of expressing my thankfulness. Yet my Sophia comprehended my meaning, and was satisfied.

But what a cruel check was your illness to all our expectations!—Unable to divine the cause, we feared your reason was entirely dethroned; which made your father rather desirous of your death, than that you should live a melancholy spectacle of what man is, when his mind is in ruins.

Before I conclude my little narrative, I must inform you of the fate of my quondam friends, Macshannon and his accomplice Durand.

About two years since, I was at Exeter, and accidentally met a mob in the street, who were attending an execution. I saw a cart draw up, in which sat two criminals, condemned for forgery, who, I perceived, were Macshannon and Durand. Our eyes instantly met. Macshannon made a motion, as if he wished to speak with me; but I appeared not

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to recollect him, and dropped behind the crowd, that no inquiry might be made after me. My blood seemed iced in my veins ; for though I had long heartily forgiven them, yet I was apprehensive I might have added to those pangs which they must necessarily feel on closing an ill-spent life by an ignominious death.

Adieu, my friend.—If I have been too prolix, pardon me, in consideration that what I have written was at your request.—Pray tell your Emmeline and my sweet Sophia, that I bespeak for myself a place at their tea-table this evening.

W. FALKNER,

LETTER XLV.

Miss Courtland to Mrs. Maitland.

TELL me, dear Madam, how I can reward your long silence upon a subject on which depended all the good or ill of my future life. But for your kind consolation and advice, how could my mind have endured the painful struggles with which it has so long combated?—I felt there could be no impropriety in esteeming the man whom my father bade me respect and honour. I could not be so blind as not to see that I was the sole object of my dear Sir William's attention; and though I could not investigate the cause of his silence on a subject which so intimately concerned me, yet he gave me reason to expect the time was approaching when the long pent-up secrets of his bosom should be all laid before me; for that my father was already acquainted with every event of his past life; and, spight of the errors with which it was clouded, he still honoured him with his friendship, and continued to shew him the affection of a son.

M 6

Thus

Thus encouraged, I no longer blushed to cherish a passion which I hoped it would be one day my pride to acknowledge.

My brother's jealousy of my amiable Falkner procured me more of his company than ever; for, by his constantly monopolizing Emmeline to himself, I seemed to become the sole property of my much-loved Sir William, who never quitted me but my bosom felt an increase of tenderness, though my lips had not dared to acknowledge it.

My poor brother is still weak and languid, in spite of the false spirits he assumes in presence of his Emmeline. He has been dreadfully ill; yet, as medicine has nearly conquered his fever, I hope time and exercise will soon restore him his strength. But his anxious impetuous temper, though all obstacles are so happily removed, still retards his recovery. His hopes are always on the wing; and his fears, by constantly clipping them, are sure to bring them to the ground; for whilst his Emmeline is endeavouring, by ten thousand engaging attentions, to make him forget the state of debility to which his illness has reduced him, he frets and fidgets, lest confinement should be prejudicial to her health.

health. Neither can he bear her to take exercise without him, for fear any danger should happen to her person. When she eats, he objects to her food, lest it should not be proper for her constitution; and when she does not eat, then he concludes she must die shortly. Sometimes, though ever against her inclination, to oblige him, she will drink a glass of wine; and if it raise the least glow upon her cheek, then he concludes she has a fever, and a rapid consumption must inevitably follow.—I rally him upon his singularities. I tell him he will make a most persecuting husband; for whether his wife's peace be destroyed with too much love, or too little, if she be miserable, it matters not from what cause it springs, if the effect be the same.—

Adieu.

S. COURTLAND.

LETTER XLVI.

H. Courtland, *Efq*; to G. Montrose, *Efq*.

Roselands.

YOUR congratulations, George, were dearly welcome to my soul. But, faith, if your breach of trust in exposing my letters to my father had turned out less to my advantage, I should have made little scruple to have cut your throat; and, according to the duellist's principles, should have thought myself justified in the act.

I really behave vastly rational, considering the tide of good fortune which has poured in upon me. The roses begin afresh to bloom on my Emmeline's cheek; and the cordial promise of her love has once more made the vigour of health appear on mine.

I send you, with permission, some anecdotes of Sir William Falkner's life. How I hate myself for my narrow prejudices against him. But I thought every man who beheld my Emmeline, must see her with my eyes. I must certainly have been

been stark blind, not to have suspected his tender regard for my sister; which has been long obvious to all the world beside. How happy is she to have bestowed her affections on a man so truly deserving them.

But my sweet Emmeline is now every thing to me. What is all the wealth in the world, George, to a man who can live upon a smile? Slender diet! perhaps you will exclaim. But if it supplies the place of other aliment, is it not as effectual? Yes, my angel's love supplies to me all the dearest blessings of life.

How much do I admire Falkner's conduct, though I could never imitate it. No, nature has thrown too much volatile essence into my constitution ever to dignify me with the character of an hero. I am all vapour and bluster—No solidity of judgment, nor no reasoning powers: they all fled when love took possession of me. I could no more have confined my passion for my adored Emmeline a secret for years to my own bosom, as poor Falkner did, than I could teach the clergy the great duties of Christianity, or make a fantastical woman of quality prefer a tête-à-tête with her

her husband to a private interview with her gallant.

We are the most agreeable party of lovers to be imagined—so rational—so complaisant—so gallant—so attentive—and so—so—so—

My fly sister!—There is no trusting these women, George. Who could have dreamed, whilst her countenance looked so demure, that all the powers of love were at war in her bosom?—Yet, with what strict decorum did she conduct herself!—Nothing, Montrose, I am now convinced, refines the feelings like a pure and chastened affection.

You will be glad to hear, extraordinary as it may appear, that I am become the *real* man of business. Truth, upon honour: and now smile, if you will.—Necessity makes a man not only wise, but prudent also.—'Tis impossible I can marry till my affairs are in better train. Settlements must be made, with a variety of *etceteras*. I understand, at length, pounds, shillings, and pence, as well as my steward; and am vastly improved in œconomy, and all that. Yet my father thinks me immethodical, and often laughs at my mode of proceeding.

“ Now,

"Now, examine these papers," cries he, "my dear Courtland; and then look over those. Then we shall be able to judge more clearly of the business in question"—And then leaves me.

On his return, he exclaims, "Well, Courtland, I hope by this time you have a thorough comprehension of the business I left with you?"

"Perfectly, Sir," shaking my scientific head; "for I have been thinking, that if the lawyers are properly active, by February I may call my Emmeline mine; and then that would be cutting off two months of the time in which you are led to expect the coming of my rival. In the mean time, could you not write to him, to hasten his return?"

"That is impossible," rejoined he; "but I shall be afraid to trust you with a wife, Courtland, till you know better how to take care of yourself. You have no prudence."

"O, Sir, but my sweet love is made up of nothing else. She has enough for both: and, knowing my own deficiency, I will submit entirely to her direction."

"But most lovers and husbands," said he, "talk a very different language; for

for the mistress, who was an angel in the lover's eye, becomes a mere woman in the husband's. But I find," continued he, "'tis some time before you will be likely to adopt my doctrine; and therefore I shall only wait to see the event.—But examine now these parchments," laying them down; "they relate to your estates in—"

" Dear, dear Sir," taking out my watch, "'tis half-past eleven o'clock; and my sweet Emmeline—I prevailed upon her at breakfast to grant me her company at twelve to take an airing."

He smiles—calls me a dilatory boy—and then leaves me to pursue my own inclinations; and so ends the important business of the day.

The dear girls will have it, that the moment we men become lovers, we cease to be companions. My sister tells Sir William, he has lost all his agreeableness already; and that there is no variety in his conversation; for it always turns on the same subject. She then bids my sweet angel pluck up her courage, assert her independence, and not suffer her lover to torment her into a compliance with all his capricious humours, for the mere indulgence of being afterwards ca-
reffed

ressed like a kitten.—“ If he becomes sensible of his faults, be sure, child,” continues she, “ never to give up your opinion in complaisance to his, when you know you are in the right; for we shall hear enough of prerogative on the other side of matrimony; and therefore let us stand up in support of our own on this.”

“ Many people, my dear children,” said my father, “ complain of the infelicities attending the marriage state, not considering that they want refinement to be happy in any other. The world in general fix their happiness in things which are unattainable in this life, always neglecting to cherish those blessings they already enjoy. Much happiness is seldom derived from great events. It is only to be attained by a constant attention to minuter things.—Domestic felicity is not to be procured by floating in the vortex of fashion, in the splendor of titles, or the glare of equipage. No, my beloved children, it chiefly consists in the tender assiduities of the wife, and the fond endearments of the husband: a coincidence of sentiment will lead them to discuss every difficulty with temper, which will prevent

vent them from hazarding a decision till the mutual good of both be consulted. And, above all things, I would wish you to remember, that all happiness ends in the married state the moment separate interests take place between a man and his wife.—Women, my dear girls, have great influence over the minds of men; and by sometimes opposing to our rougher passions the gracious smile of good humour, you make yourselves queens for life, without letting us feel how much we are your slaves.”

I stopped him, to drink a bumper to such a sentiment; and then added, “ Since our happiness in the married state depends so much on the conduct of our wives, I bid fair for winning the prize” (kissing my Emmeline’s hand); “ for I have but little dependence upon myself.”

“ Nor anybody else, I believe,” said my sister; “ for as long as you continue a SELF-TORMENTOR, the poor creature who draws with you in the same yoke, will be continually goaded by your prancings and curvettings. If you do not shew more composure in the character of a husband than you have hitherto

therto done in that of a lover, my poor Emmeline may be driven out of her senses before the honey-moon is over."

My father and Falkner laughed.—My dear girl blushed.

" Nay, nay, consider, my good sister," rejoined I, " if my passions have been hitherto kept in a ferment, consider that you, and your Sir William here, have been the principal accessaries to my disorder. How was it possible that my mind could retain its firmness, with a dagger continually pointed at my heart?"

I shall date my next from London, where I must be inevitably in a few days.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XLVII.

Miss Ackworth to Mrs. Aylbert.

Roselands.

WE have lost Mr. Courtland. His attendance on parliament makes his absence indispensably necessary: and if every body joins in regetting the loss of his company, surely, Madam, my poor heart may be allowed the tender tribute of a sigh.

Alas! how changed are all surrounding objects, now he that inspired them all with delight is gone!—When he was present, the gloomy approaches of Winter passed unheeded by me; the trees lost their foliage—the fields their verdure—the flowers their bloom—But I perceived not the change.

I wish you could see the alacrity with which the dear General exerts himself in his children's cause; because it would open to you new virtues in his bosom. But he is again summoned to attend the old Earl of Courtland, who seems to be hastening towards the kingdom of spirits. Sir William Falkner is to accompany him part of the way, on his road

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to Scotland. He hopes to return in time to pass the Christmas with us ; when, we flatter ourselves, Mr. Courtland will be added to our party.—In the mean time, our good friend Mrs. Maitland has promised him to play the part of a gallant. But whether she succeeds or not, I am to determine when we meet.

I fear I have contracted too many of my dear Mr. Courtland's habits ever to have my mind perfectly at ease. His absence has already given rise to so many fears—so many tender inquietudes about him—that they will force themselves into my happiest moments. I have lost my gaiety in losing my friend ; and though every body is loading me with kindnesses, yet there is still an aching void in my bosom which nothing can fill up.—
Adieu.

E. ACKWORTH.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.